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TEACHING ACROSS BORDERS: BUSINESS AS USUAL?

by

Bobbe McGhie Allen

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences

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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan Utah

2011

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**ABSTRACT**

Teaching Across Borders: Business as Usual?

by

Bobbe McGhie Allen, Doctor of Philosophy

Utah State University, 2011

Major Professor: Dr. Joanne P. Bentley  
Department: Instructional Technology

The quest to comprehend how cultural differences can impact learning is one of those intriguing challenges that continue to beguile some scholars and educational leaders even at a time that is characterized as globalized. This dissertation is a qualitative case study about teaching to culturally diverse populations and is primarily based on the interviews of seven accountants designated as instructors and the direct observation of those instructors while teaching accounting principles to other accountants. The English language was used despite the fact that all participants, including the instructors, spoke English as a second or third language and came from diverse cultures around the world.

It brings to light how an American company (American World Trade or AWT) felt they succeeded in teaching to the diverse population of students though not purposely providing accommodations for the diverse cultural differences in the classroom. During the year 2009, AWT took the materials USU developed around the world and presented conferences in regional offices of Bangkok, Budapest, Santo Domingo, Pretoria, and San

Salvador. The pilot study interviews took place at the end of 2009. This study was based on the conference that took place in February 2010 in which 16 of the 70 countries were represented.

This dissertation does several things: First, it looks at the cultural dimensions of students and instructors from 16 different countries, in an international setting, and examines if lack of knowledge about cultural dimensions and accommodating for them could interfere with learning. Second, it looks at the strategies and behaviors used by the instructors who were not knowledgeable of cultural dimensions to reveal if they were unconsciously adapting their teaching for the culturally diverse. Third, this study offers an in-depth look at several additional factors, including cultural intelligence (CQ), which could explain their ostensible teaching successes.

(199 pages)

## DEDICATION

This manuscript is dedicated to my five beautiful sons and my parents. To my sons, Kory, Kris, Jeff, Jon, and Ash, this was something I wanted for myself, of course, but I could not have sustained the pressure and dark times if I did not first want this for you. I remember the discussions with all of you about the path I was about to embark upon. It meant an unknown number of years of more poverty and wrestling with the demons of inadequacy. It meant sacrificing the precious hours and minutes of watching my beautiful grandchildren come into the world and grow. My hope is that this act of taking our family into the realm of the educated will have a lasting impact on our future generations.

To my mother, Grace, you promised to stay alive long enough to watch me transform into a doctor. I knew I could not dawdle—I had a small window to get this done. Thank you for your continued smiles, support, and love. From the time I was a small child, you encouraged me to get lost in books. My first recollections of passion were at libraries, book stores, and book shelves of friends. They transformed me and brought me to where I am today.

To my stepfather, Jim, you were the first family member I knew who graduated from college and I was mesmerized by this. I looked to you always for support when I could not find my way. I thank you deeply.

To my beautiful daughters who came later in life: Bonnie, Erika, and Haley, thank you for your patience, your love for my sons, my fabulous grandchildren, and allowing me to love you.

To a very special couple, Bryce and Leesa, if it was not for your dedication and love for my son, Ash, I would have never been able to go to school.

As the first generation doctorate in my family, I dedicate “our” accomplishments to the generations of scholars to come. You all have a tremendous legacy to uphold!

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To the beautiful friendships I encountered in Egypt: Jed, Sherif, Dr. Wael, Salah, Ehsan, Khalid, Mahdy, and so many, many, more, thank you for allowing me into your



lives and changing mine forever.

To my classmates, Sean, Tom, Heather, Melinda, Bill, Joel, Jiayi, Beijxu, Max, John Thomas, Kristie, Grace Lin, Tiffany, Raphael, and Gisela, thank you for your support. You all are awesome!

To the girls I grew up with and now grow old with, thank you for your continued support: Randy, Diana, Virginia, Barbara, Sharon, Becky, Sheryl, MaryAnne, Sandie, Charlotte, Marian, and Annie.

Last of all, I thank my parents, my husband, my five fabulous sons, their wives, and my grandchildren for putting up with my disappearing acts (flying off to Egypt). I love all of you. This accomplishment is because of you and for you. May our family take on this trend of being highly educated.

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin. (hooks, 1994, p. 13)

Bobbe McGhie Allen

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The contemporary worlds of business and of education are decidedly linked with constant globalization which means there is a steady flow of people crossing borders who are culturally diverse. This phenomenon makes mastering the ability to interact with different cultures imperative for succeeding in both business and education; however, adaptation to such diversity is a demanding process. Kim (2000), in discussing cross-cultural experiences said, “Companies found that their overseas operations were being hampered because their employees were not effective in coping with unfamiliar social and business practices” (p. 16).

A consequence of globalization is that a great deal of research exists which looks at cultural diversity in business. Cultural dimensions have been defined, cultural differences have been identified, and innovations to address diversity created. Although debates continue about cultural dimensions and cultural differences (i.e., Baskerville, 2003; Cardon, 2008; McSweeney, 2002), few will debate the distressing accounts of cultures impact: Cultural differences can cause problems for businesses, educators, and students.

Globalization has also paved the way for a construct called cultural intelligence or CQ. Early and Ang (2003) developed a psychometric measure for CQ that can identify individuals who are able to adapt successfully to unfamiliar cultural environments by combining cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral elements. Social skills can be easily transferred across cultures by an individual with a high CQ (Brislin,

Worthley, & MacNabb, 2006).

This study was designed to contribute to the body of research concerning cultural differences in the classroom. Cultural dimensions, cultural stereotyping and multicultural education are explored. Also investigated are additional factors that contribute to effectively teaching in a diverse classroom such as how cultural intelligence (CQ) allows students and instructors to recognize when a teaching or learning situation is different and adapt accordingly. Addressing the urgency for successful border crossings, although acknowledged by many, is still ignored by some institutions and some organizations at a time when the need is more important than ever because of an increasingly mobile and global population.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is not known to what extent cultural adaptation is necessary for real learning to take place in a culturally diverse setting. This population of students entering classrooms around the world has led some educators and researchers to advocate for a multicultural perspective that will aid in developing a culturally responsive pedagogy within the educational curriculum and instructor classroom practices. This work has had a variety of labels including “culturally appropriate” (Au & Jordan, 1981), “culturally congruent” (Mohatt & Erickson, 1981), “culturally responsive” (Cazden & Leggett, 1981; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Ladson-Billings, 1995), and “culturally compatible” (Jordan, 1985; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987).

In the primary, secondary, and tertiary American classrooms, Eurocentric



assimilation practices as well as mainstream practices which do not incorporate different ethnic, gender, religious, racial or cultural groups into the curriculum have a long history and are deeply imbedded. According to Banks and Banks (2001), the problems found in learning do not always reflect a student's inability to learn but may reflect the classroom practices of cultural inequality, insensitivity and hegemony. An instructor's perceptions, preparations, knowledge, personal experiences, beliefs and expectations play a major role in a student's performance. The concept of equality in the classroom requires cross-culturally competent instructors and cultural contextualization of curriculum. Cultural assumptions that an instructor forms, if incorrect, can directly lead to negative consequences as well as a student's low performance. Instructors need to develop skills in critical consciousness and culturally relevant pedagogy (Banks & Banks, 2001) as well as understand the differences in behavioral codes and cultural values. These findings come under the heading of multiculturalism. Although multiculturalism research is found mainly in K-12, its principles will be explored in the context of the business classrooms involved in this research.

An American company, American World Trade (AWT—a pseudonym), felt that the consequences of the many differing cultures attending their new accounting courses, was not troublesome. I was concerned, as the lead Instructional Designer, that providing a range of instructional practices informed by and responsive to the variety of students attending, ensured a larger degree of success. "When the cultures of students and teachers are not congruent, someone loses out" (Banks & Banks, 2001, p. 220). In this study the instructors and students all came from a variety of third world countries. The AWT

administration chose to use English (not the primary language of any of the students or instructors) to develop and teach the courses because it was felt that using English was practical and efficient since everyone working for AWT is required to be fluent in English. When I approached the administrators regarding contextualizing the curriculum to reflect the diverse cultures of students, they felt it would be too difficult. In the beginning, they also refused my requests for a demographic study needed to analyze the participants. When I asked the Chief Accounting Officer (CAO) how he proposed to mitigate the problems brought about by vast cultures attending the classes, he replied:

Usually we have many cultures, so it is very difficult to assess each culture separately but I deal with the people like we have a common ground. We are all colleagues, we are all seeking knowledge, we work in the same environment and I think doing this is successful. I don't deal with people differently based on different cultures, we are all the same, we are all, you know, having the same target.

Despite my reservations, a year after teaching the courses, the instructors stated that they had succeeded. The “head office” in the U.S. also acknowledged their success by extending the teaching conferences for another three years. Were these instructors capable of teaching and holding themselves accountable for their students’ success? Did the instructors create a learning environment that promotes culturally responsive pedagogy? Understanding the facets that amalgamate and cause students to learn through the instructors’ preparation, perceptions, knowledge and classroom practices will shed light on what happened in the classrooms, which in turn will help clarify whether or not instruction without cultural adaptation is the *best* (or most effective) instructional strategy in this situation.

## **Background of the Study**

Adler and Bartholomew (1992) wrote about the need for globally competent people in North American firms, and long before Friedman (2007) officially defined the world as flat. As changes began to take shape in the world, the expatriate and international managers of the day needed a new kind of training. They learned years ago how to cross cultural borders, but something different began shaping the business world. The following statement by Adler and Bartholomew explained the differences.

The North American economies (and therefore North American firms) have had an advantage: they were the only developed economies left intact following World War II and were thus “the only game in town.” Today, Asia, Europe, and the Americas each have highly competitive firms and economies, none of which will continue to prosper without being excellent at including people and business worldwide. (p. 62)

The U.S. no longer dominated. Other countries did not have to do it the way the Americans do it. Adler and Bartholomew (1992) conducted a survey of 50 North American firms to inform their research. They found that business strategies far outpaced human resources. The time came to create transnational (a term used by Adler and Bartholomew) firms, with transnational executives: “Symbolically, firms achieve transnational representation through the well balanced portfolio of passports held by senior management” (p. 57). They concluded that a transnational workforce should equal the number of nations represented in the company but should not be hired to the exclusion of the others.

The old paradigm held power and influence at the headquarters of corporations. Expatriates sent out to the foreign subsidiaries expected to interact across cultures, at all

times maintaining dominance both structurally and culturally. The transnational paradigm creates a development center far from the cultural influences of the national headquarters and where training takes place for staff and executives. Transpatriates hired from all parts of the world and then sent out to other parts of the world develop into globally sophisticated managers for use in the operation and the strategy building of the firm (Adler & Bartholomew, 1992).

In today's world, teaching and learning seldom take place in homogeneous classrooms. Instructors and students cross cultural borders daily, either in a physical or an online presence. With so much diversity in a classroom, who should do the adjusting: the student, the instructor or the designer of the teaching material? Many instructors, seemingly unaware of their own cultural proclivities, shrug off the need to make changes by saying that they teach "neutrally" (Thomas, Mitchell, & Joseph, 2002).

A review of the history of education in the U.S. finds students being required to assimilate into the national culture (Eurocentric). Students from cultures foreign to the "national culture" were not only expected to learn an unfamiliar language but also the unfamiliar cultural nuances of learning and teaching (Gay, 2000). Teaching began to change and a new population of researchers revealed that some culturally diverse students failed or dropped out because of assimilation difficulties. Now educational institutions seek out students from beyond their borders, further compounding the problems for instructors. Many foreign students have no need or desire to assimilate to a national culture different from their own. And why should they? In an article, Kingston and Forland (2008) asked the question:

However, why would it be necessary for a student to “conform to” or “replace” their cultural heritage with that of a country in which they are studying for a relatively short amount of time? Surely one of the aims in studying abroad is to immerse oneself in, and gain experience and knowledge of, another culture, rather than in adopting that culture. (p. 211)

Instructors can teach to all students with their individual cultures intact. A

homogeneous classroom is hard to find. The blond haired, blue eyed student acculturated in Los Angeles but transplanted to a small Midwestern town may find herself/himself facing xenophobia in a classroom of similar looking children. Why? The student exhibits clinginess, or its opposite, detachment; the student may give too much eye contact, or not enough; the student acts too friendly or not friendly enough; and maybe the student performs in an assertive manner, or not assertive enough. Acculturation takes on many different characteristics and behaviors.

Hodge (2000) painted a picture of culture with words:

Culture is a mosaic of patterns established by repeated practice. Each of these patterns met a need or solved a problem at a certain point in a people’s history. Culture is this accumulation of life experiences spanning generations. For a native, finding a way through this maze of interconnecting paths is second nature, but to an outsider who hasn’t learned the paths and doesn’t know where the ones that are visible lead, getting across the landscape of another culture is an enigma. (p. 27)

A difference in culture has the potential of creating a huge road block for successful teaching and learning. This was realized early in the business world. The business world was the first to acknowledge this. In 1987, Professor Ian Mitroff said: “It is no longer business as usual. Global competition has forced...[executives] to recognize that if they and their organizations are to survive, let alone prosper, they will have to learn to manage and to think very differently” (p. x). Cultural mingling is a complicated

process for many and the education field has been much slower to recognize the impact of culture in the classroom. Ignoring the cultural differences found in classrooms would risk many different kinds of problems, including failure to learn on the part of the students. Carroll and Ryan (2005) illustrated the problem:

In a constructivist view of learning, lecturers create the contexts and provide relevant information; learners, in turn, activate their existing schemas and connect them to new knowledge, thereby developing further understandings. Because learning is individually constructed, socially supported, and culturally mediated, learners in unfamiliar social and cultural environments may have difficulty in activating, or “hooking” into, their existing schemas in order to build new knowledge, especially where new information is incongruent. The result can be “cognitive dissonance” or psychological confusion. (p. 14)

The following lists some of the characteristics and behaviors which cause conflict: The rules for participation; the rules surrounding authority and gender issues; linguistic norms; different orientations toward achievement; and the different concepts of value. Constructed meaning occupies a space in any kind of instruction. Culture permeates everything, making neutrality impossible.

### **History of the Project**

This study is about an American company that saw no pressing reason for helping the instructors or the students accommodate for the wide chasm of cultural differences between them. The conference center is in the Middle East and uses primarily Egyptian instructors to teach. All of the classes were taught in English although the participants speak English as a second or third language. There were five different regional conferences in 2009 (Bangkok, Budapest, San Salvador, Santo Domingo, and Pretoria) beginning with the inaugural Cairo conference in December 2008.

The company spends money all over the globe in at least 70 different countries. It employs accountants, indigenous to the country where money is being spent, and teaches them what is expected in terms of how to manage these finances utilizing U.S. standards. In a survey sent out in 2007 to the indigenous accountants, 40% declared that they never received formal training for their current positions and that the training they did receive did not address “specific business processes and requirements” (as reported in an AWT magazine, 2010). Several years prior to the survey, the financial community had also undergone a software change that included new requirements for financial business processes. Anyone using the new software was trained between 2004 and 2006 but turnover in employees as well as continual upgrading of the software led to a need for more training. In 2008, Utah State University (USU) became part of the process. The center in Cairo, Egypt was to be the home of the training center and under the direction of the CAO, materials were gathered and trainers were developed.

### **Development of Materials**

Financial managers (subject matter experts) from around the world submitted their work to Cairo who then sent the material to a team at USU. The team at USU designed the teaching manuals for two courses: General Ledger and Voucher Exam. Each training manual consisted of approximately 800 pages that included:

- Learning objectives in each chapter
- Summary of the chapter
- Key terms in each chapter
- Content
- Graphics
- Questions to be used (cartoons) in the presentation software

- Glossary, by chapter and overall
- Appendices
- Questions that trainees should ask themselves
- Questions instructor should ask about the material
- Icons
  - Tips/Special Information (light bulb)
  - Internal controls (scales of justice)
  - Examples/Problems (pencil)

Each lesson became a chapter. At first the manuals were given to the participants on a CD at the end of the conference. But when constant updates became necessary, the manual was put online so that all financial managers had access and the teams that were teaching from the manual could update it continually.

The USU team consisted of Dr. Joanne Bentley, me (the team leader), and master's students from the Jon Huntsman School of Business and the Department of Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences. We had less than 3 months to transform the massive amount of material given to us. At the beginning of the project, I attempted to do a needs analysis by requesting information about the students. My request was denied. When I explained that cultural diversity would have an impact on the courses, the manager over the project told me not to worry about it.

The USU team also created over 1,000 presentation slides to be used for the trainings. This was an adventure in and of itself. Slide presentation design is as much about culture as was the content of the training materials and that significance became a problem when we arrived in Cairo. The slides were developed using “best practices” in the U.S. When the trainers and the CFO saw the stark plainness, as is culturally correct in the USA, they were not happy. They wanted color, movement, and lots of words. The large number of words reflected the trainers' needs to use the presentation slides to guide



their teaching. We were ineffective in trying to explain why the presentation slides were designed the way they were. We then spent most of the conference time changing the presentation slides (sometimes minutes before the presentations). This was one lesson where culture was not “neutral” in shaping product delivery. Ultimately, however, AWT must have appreciated our work because they continued to ask us back.

### **Purpose and Objectives of the Study**

I conducted a pilot study 10 months after the inaugural conference and 4 months prior to collecting data for this dissertation. It included interviews of the trainers who delivered the training material in six countries (mentioned earlier) during 2009 and will be discussed in Chapter IV. The pilot study revealed that AWT considered the conferences successful based on the gain scores (defined later) between the pretests and posttests administered at each conference. The pretest determined the student’s knowledge of accounting prior to taking the course and the posttest, taken immediately following the last class of the course, determined how much learning took place. Gain scores (the difference between the posttest and pretest scores) averaged well over 40% and sometimes in the 90%’s (see Appendix F). I sought a greater understanding of how the instructors taught classes to culturally diverse students despite claiming that they were unaware of how cultural differences could impact their teaching and also claiming that they had never been taught how to deal with cultural differences.

The following lists the objectives of the research. First, I employed the cultural dimensions of Hall (1976); House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004); and

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), to identify the cultural proclivities of the students and how their particular cultures might impact their ability to learn. Second, the dimensions in multicultural education of Banks and Banks (2001), Bennett (2003), and Gay (2000) are discussed for relevance in a business classroom. Third, I observed instructors to identify strategies and behaviors being used in their teaching that could have helped diverse students negotiate learning. Fourth, I looked for additional factors that may have contributed to the outcome of the classes. The study provides descriptions that reveal the instructors did use culturally responsive techniques in their classrooms, although they were unaware of doing it.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Acculturation*—A process by which a person acquires the culture of the society that he/she inhabits.

*Assimilation*—the replacement of behaviors, values, perspectives and characteristics that differ from the person's ethnic group.

*Culture*—national culture is being discussed here and it consists of patterns, explicit and implicit of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems reflect products of action, or conditioning elements of future action (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963).

*Cultural competence*—one who has achieved an advanced level in the process of

becoming intercultural and whose cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics are not limited but are open to growth beyond the psychological parameters of only one culture... “The intercultural person possesses an intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans and, at the same time, accepts and appreciates the differences that lie between people of different cultures” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1984, p. 230).

*Cultural identity*—the sense of self one feels by contact through cultural groups in which they grew up and were socialized. Factors that are more or less permanent are gender, race, age cohort, physical ability/characteristics, and sexual orientation. Factors that are considered fluid are education, religion, occupation, marital or parental status, geographic location, socioeconomic class, or military and refugee experience. Culture is not static and personal identities derived from cultural conceptualizations can change.

*Cultural racism*—a cultural group’s beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that assert the superiority of their group’s accomplishments, achievements, and creativity over those of other groups based on race.

*Cultural values*—an individual’s desired or preferred way of acting or knowing something that is sustained over a period of time and which governs actions or decisions.

*Culturally responsive and culturally sensitive teaching*—These terms are often used interchangeably when referring to the implementation of cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and students’ preferred learning styles. They make learning more appropriate and effective; moreover, it teaches to and through the strengths of the students (Gay, 2000).

*Discrimination*—students treated differently based on their race, ethnicity, sexual preference, gender or social class.

*Diversity*—refers to the difference among groups of people.

*Ethnic group*—consists of people that share a common history, culture, values, behaviors and characteristics, but not necessarily the same biological traits or racial group. For instance, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants can include Italians and Irish among their ethnic group.

*Ethnocentrism*—The perception that one's own way is the best way when viewing the world. This perception is the standard by which all other perspectives are measured and held to examination.

*Eurocentric curriculum*—emphasizes concepts influenced primarily from the perspectives of European nations and cultures.

*Global education*—a concern for issues and problems related to the world community and with the inter-dependence of people and their common fate, regardless of national boundaries.

*Mainstream*—consists of the student who shares common characteristics with the dominant ethnicity and culture. Usually white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant, they belong to the middle or higher social classes.

*Multicultural education*—a reform movement designed to change the educational environment so that students from diverse racial and ethnic groups will experience equal educational opportunities. Defined as a “total school reform effort designed to increase education equity for a range of cultural, ethnic, and economic groups” (Banks, 1993, p.

6). It also “acknowledges that schools are essential to laying the foundation for the transformation of society and the elimination of oppression and injustice” (Gorski, 2000, p. 2).

*Multiculturalism*—a philosophical position and movement that assumes the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society reflects the institutional structures of educational institutions, the staff, the norms and values, the curriculum, and the student body.

*Parochialism*—viewing the world solely through one’s own eyes and perspective. A person with a parochial perspective does not recognize other people’s different ways of living and working as valid. Parochialism occurs, to a certain extent, in all cultures.

### **Summary**

In a globalized world, when companies attend to the importance of culture, the CAO of an American company stated that they all had the same goal and nothing useful comes from treating culturally diverse people different. The aim of this study was to observe the classes and interview the instructors, in order to ascertain if this was true. Chapter II describes cultural dimensions as the conceptual framework of the study and reviews the germane literature. Additional factors are also discussed that I propose are relevant to the research. Chapter III lays out the methods used to conduct the study and Chapter IV discusses the findings. The conclusions and discussion of recommendations, as well as suggestions for future research are drawn Chapter V.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the worlds of both business and education, globalization has had an indomitable impact in that people from different cultures mingle and cross borders in great numbers. Culture can influence the success or the failure of both business and education in a myriad of ways. When cultures differ, conflicts threaten to impair cooperation between groups; therefore, this study examines the cultural proclivities in the AWT classrooms. This chapter explores the literature of cultural dimensions, multicultural education and other factors which could mitigate cultural differences and asserts that globalization and the flattening of the world (according to Friedman, 2007) necessitates a change in educational practices.

AWT delivered training material to employees who are from countries where the business has a presence. The training courses were designed to teach employees how to use the company software and carry out the company's accounting practices. Their focus was on the end goal of mastering content with seemingly little concern for the means to achieve that end.

Information was gathered from the literature on culture, cultural dimensions, cultural competence and additional factors that include multicultural education, the use of ethics codes, cultural intelligence, languages, classroom climate, and heterogeneous teams. The search process included using Internet searches on key concepts as well as library and research databases, looking for articles and research works written on these key concepts over the last few decades. This chapter summarizes the results of that search

process and includes a conceptual framework which will tie together the key elements in the research design.

### **What Is Culture?**

Differences in national culture can affect business deals or a student's ability to navigate successfully in a classroom. However, defining culture seems to be problematic for many researchers. Kroeber and Kluckhohn reported 164 definitions of culture (as cited by Muzychenko and Saeed, 2004). Because I am using the cultural dimensions from Hall, House, and Hofstede, I share their definitions of culture:

Edward T. Hall (1976):

Hence, man automatically treats what is most characteristically his own (the culture of his youth) as though it were innate. He is forced into the position of thinking and feeling that anyone whose behavior is not predictable or is peculiar in any way is slightly out of his mind, improperly brought up, irresponsible, psychopathic, politically motivated to a point beyond all redemption, or just plain inferior. (p. 43)

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 12) added to that definition by saying that culture was "...collective programming of the mind; it manifests itself not only in values, but in more superficial ways: in symbols, heroes, and rituals."

House and colleagues (2004) defined culture as "shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations" (p. 57).

Common elements help explain why cultural differences could affect a classroom.

- Culture controls our actions, behaviors, and interpretation of the world
- A person's culture creates a response to the environment
- A person believes his or her own culture is innate and the only correct way to behave. (Adler, 2000)

We all have a unique set of cultural characteristics, and those characteristics differ across humans. Culture is obtained while in our youth and then impacts our actions, our behaviors and our interpretation of the world (Hall, 1976). Culture is what we use when we respond to the environment, and it is how we distinguish members of one group from another. But it can change. When societies were stable and not subjected to outside influences, culture was more stable and only changed incrementally from generation to generation (Hall, 1976). Now we see intermingling of cultures every day. Sometimes it is because of war or an environmental crisis or sometimes people become aware of their own culture and choose to change. As countries continue to connect in innumerable ways, cultural borders define and redefine the understanding of how to respond both positively and effectively to the opportunities afforded by the crossing (Adler, 2000).

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study uses cultural dimensions from Hall (1976), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), and House and colleagues (2004) to frame the research. Cultural dimensions define broadly the cultural proclivities of a nation. They generally break into geographical regions but do not always apply to an individual within that region. Some educators use cultural dimensions to understand differences in behavior, expectations and attitudes.



## Cultural Dimensions

The idea of cultural dimensions (CD) has been around for about 50 years. It is a way of dividing human culture into values and practices and naming them in order to discuss and measure similarities and differences among people. CDs are conceived of as a continuum with diverse endpoints. The fact that culture can change and does change impacts the use of cultural dimensions. This study will look at three different studies that defined and named CDs.

**Edward T. Hall.** According to Gannon (2001), Edward T. Hall was an anthropologist who spent much of his life looking at the communication patterns of different cultures and then differentiated them according to four dimensions.

- Context, or the amount of information that must be explicitly stated if a message or communication is to be successful
- Space, or the ways of communicating through specific handling of personal space (e.g., North Americans tend to keep more space between them while communicating than do South Americans)
- Time, which is either monochronic (scheduling and completing one activity at a time) or polychronic (not distinguishing between activities and completing them simultaneously)
- Information flow, which is the structure and speed of messages between individuals and/or organizations. (p. 9)

Hall (1976) is best known for creating the dimensions of *high-context* and *low-context* culture. A high context culture leaves many things unsaid because their culture says more than words do. As a result, it is important to differentiate words and word choices. The low context culture speaks using enough words to not leave anything to “culture” or guesswork. Words do not have the value that they do in a high-context culture.

Table 2-1, describes the cultural characteristics in both high and low contexts.

Take for instance, instructors with western world expectations or a low-context style of teaching. They would assume that students will possess a high degree of learner control, a tolerance for uncertainty, and be materialistic and highly aggressive. If they encounter students that are from a high-context style of teaching, their students would be uncomfortable and possibly not know how to respond to an instructor that makes them responsible for their own learning. These students would not be aggressive and would be seeking certainty which they would not get. Unless the instructor or the student understand their differences and know how to cope with those differences, there would be potential for frustration and possibly failure.

**Geert Hofstede.** Hofstede's original work, first published in 1980, is derived from a research project for IBM in which he identifies cultural indices for IBM's foreign employees living and working in their native country. Hofstede's (1980) work was about management theories and suggested that when "home-country" management theories

Table 2-1

*Hall's Cultural Characteristics in Low and High Context*

Low context cultural characteristics	High context cultural characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit communication</li> <li>• Messages plainly coded</li> <li>• Verbalized details</li> <li>• Surface reactions</li> <li>• Flexible in-groups &amp; out-groups</li> <li>• Fragile personal bonds</li> <li>• Low personal commitment</li> <li>• Highly organized time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implicit communication</li> <li>• Internalized messages</li> <li>• Nonverbal coding</li> <li>• Reserved reactions</li> <li>• Distinct in-groups and out-groups</li> <li>• Strong personal bonds</li> <li>• High personal commitment</li> <li>• Open and flexible time</li> </ul>

Adapted from Hall (1976).

develop in one country they can lose their effectiveness in a different country. The following is a list and a description of Hofstede's cultural dimensions:

***Power distance.*** This cultural dimension is about the way societies handle the problem of inequality between humans. In societies with a “weak” or “low” power distance (PD), the inequalities between people are minimized. Instructors and students are considered equal in a classroom with equal rights. Hierarchies do exist but they are more for administrative convenience. Societies with a “strong” or “high” PD accept the differences between people and do not consider each other equal. Everyone belongs to their “rightful place” and life exists in levels of hierarchy that reinforces inequality. The leaders are expected to lead, make decisions autocratically and paternalistically (as we see with the CAO that heads the Cairo office). A person that is subordinate to someone else, like a student in a classroom, will not disagree with the instructor.

Students in the Cairo conference were encouraged by the instructors to speak out. Even the CFO of the company, who had flown to Cairo to observe the training, repeatedly encouraged students to speak out. He actively engaged them in disagreements which seemed to convey that such discourse was for the benefit of learning and not about disloyalty.

In a high-power distance classroom, the student is dependent upon the instructor; the class is instructor centered; the educational process is highly personalized; the instructor is considered a guru; and there is no arguing with the instructor. The power distance is low if the instructor treats the student as an equal; the student is at the center of teaching; the student is expected to take initiative in their learning; students do not fear

asking questions or arguing with the instructor; and their relationship is impersonal.

***Individualism/collectivism.*** Individualism pertains to societies that look out for the individual. They are expected to look out for themselves and for immediate family. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), the most individualistic societies are the U.S., Australia, England, and the Netherlands. Collectivism is found in societies that maintain very strong in-groups. The people that belong to in-groups look out for each other with unquestioning loyalty throughout a lifetime.

An historical perspective of this dimension can be seen by looking at the legal and religious institutions of ancient civilizations. The first “laws” discovered were from King Hammurabi of Babylonia. They were about behavior and punishment and were the first recorded attempt at ending retaliation by instituting monetary fines for such behavior. Another ancient book of laws comes from Moses. These laws were instituted to regulate individual behavior in order to protect groups. These laws are the foundation of Western thought. In contrast, Eastern religions focused on the duties and obligations of society within a hierarchical structure or collectivism.

One element of collectivism concerns hiring a person with the best contacts and relationships and not because of merit or qualifications. Egypt would normally be seen as a collectivist country; however, right before the conference began in Cairo in February, one of the men on the financial management team was forced into retirement. It upset many people and one of the instructors said it affected her ability to perform to her upmost. Forced terminations such as this are very rare in a collectivist society. This was an American Company, and when asked during the interviews if anyone believed in

nepotism (a strong correlate of collectivism), all said no. It appeared they held on to some collectivist attitudes while saying otherwise.

How does this affect a classroom? This is the degree to which a society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships. In the individualist society students speak out; nepotism is considered immoral; people expect to be treated as individuals regardless of their background; conflicts are salutary; and learning is lifelong. In a collectivist society students won't speak up in a classroom without group sanction; students form subgroups; nepotism is expected; conflict is avoided; students should not lose face; tradition is the goal; and learning is for the young.

***Gender egalitarianism.*** This is not the term used by Hofstede, and because I feel his measure is poor on masculine and feminine, I use the House and colleagues (2004) term here. This dimension looks at how the biological differences between men and women have become perpetuated in social and organizational roles played by men and women. The expectations of a masculine culture are assertiveness, ambition, toughness, competition, and striving for material wealth whereas the feminine cultures are modest, tender and more attentive to the care of children, the weak and exhibit a non-material quality in life. This is not about defining the roles of women and men, because the culture will take on the different expectations despite gender (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). House and colleagues also subscribed to this dimension but actually broke it into two distinct dimensions—gender egalitarianism and assertiveness (p. 377).

What are cultural differences and when do they become a matter of concern in a heterogeneous classroom? Given the increasing globalization our educational systems are

experiencing there is a need to understand the cultural influences in classrooms. This is the degree to which a society reinforces or not the traditional male role of achievement, power and control. In a masculine society the instructor is identified as a father figure; instructors do not praise students; the best students are the norm; students try to make themselves visible; failure is disastrous; the brilliance of the instructor dominates; women teach younger children; and men teach at universities. In the feminist society the instructor praises weaker students to encourage them; the average student is the norm; ridicule accompanies assertive behavior and excelling; failure is a minor incident; everyone avoids aggression; instructor friendliness and social skills dominate; there is a male/female mix of teaching; and men and women both can teach younger children.

***Uncertainty avoidance.*** Uncertainty avoidance (UA) is described as how one deals with the uncertainty that is life. “Uncertainty avoidance involves the extent to which ambiguous situations are threatening to individuals, to which rules and order are preferred, and to which uncertainty is tolerated in a society” (House et al., 2004, p. 602). Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) discussed how technology, law, and religion were used to defend against uncertainties. To illustrate, they suggested that nature was somewhat controlled by technology: The building of homes to shelter from weather and the weather systems designed to predict. Laws or rules were used in society to control behavior that might otherwise be uncertain; for instance, retaliation is controlled through monetary fines. Organizations have their rules to control for unpredictable behavior. When law or technology cannot regulate an uncertainty that a society faces, religion becomes the coping mechanism. Inside of an organization this is reshaped as a “ritual.” Hofstede and

Hofstede (2005) described rituals as “writing and filing of memos and reports, accounting, planning and control systems, computer simulations, and the nomination of experts as persons who are beyond uncertainty” (p. 148).

A high uncertainty avoidance classroom is highly structured, with precise objectives, detailed assignments, strict timetables; one correct answer; instructors are experts with all the answers; easy reads are suspect; intellectual disagreement is disloyalty. A low uncertainty avoidance classroom despises too much structure; likes open-ended learning and vague objectives, has broad assignments; no timetables; one correct answer is taboo; it is okay to say “I don’t know”; respect goes to instructors who use plain language as opposed to esoteric language and disagreement is stimulating.

***Long-term orientation.*** This dimension is the degree to which a society embraces or does not embrace long-term devotion to traditional forward thinking values. High long-term classrooms value long-term commitments and respect for tradition. Students attribute success to effort and have a talent for applied and concrete sciences. It is hard for outsiders to belong. Low long-term classrooms do not reinforce the concept of long-term or traditional orientations. Students attribute success to luck and have a talent for theoretical, abstract science. Change can occur more rapidly as long-term traditions and commitments do not impede change.

**House and colleagues.** In 2004, House and colleagues edited a book called *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*. Its purpose was to “replicate Hofstede’s (1980) landmark study and extend that study to test hypotheses relevant to relationships among society-level variables, organizational

practices, and leader attributes and behavior” (p. xxv). They looked at how culture might be related to the effectiveness of society, organizations and leadership. GLOBE provides a broad range of cross-cultural data that contributes to the understanding of what different cultures value and which behaviors influence people and organizational processes to achieve desired goals. Below is a list of House colleagues’ nine dimensions of culture. After the definition, characteristics will be listed in the table following each dimension.

**Power distance.** This is the same as Hofstede and Hofstede (2005). “This dimension reflects the extent to which a community accepts and endorses authority, power differences, and status privileges (House et al., 2004, p. 513). In Table 2-2, the characteristics for power distance are described with large and small characteristics.

**Uncertainty avoidance.** This is the same as Hofstede and Hofstede (2005). It “...involves the extent to which ambiguous situations are threatening to individuals, to which rules and order are preferred, and to which uncertainty is tolerated in a society (House et al., 2004, p. 602).

Table 2-3 describes the characteristics for uncertainty avoidance in high and low characteristics.

Table 2-2

*Power Distance Cultural Characteristics*

Large power distance characteristics:	Small power distance characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society is differentiated into classes</li> <li>• Power is seen as providing social order</li> <li>• Upward social mobility is limited</li> <li>• Resources available to only a few</li> <li>• Information is localized and hoarded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Society has a large middle class</li> <li>• Power linked to corruption and coercion</li> <li>• High upward social mobility</li> <li>• Resources are available to almost all</li> <li>• Information is widely shared</li> </ul>

*Note.* Based on Table 17-2, House et al. (2004, p. 536).



Table 2-3

*Uncertainty Avoidance Cultural Characteristics*

High uncertainty avoidance characteristics	Low uncertainty avoidance characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalize interactions with others</li> <li>• Use legal contracts</li> <li>• Orderly, meticulous record keeping, document conclusions in meetings</li> <li>• Rely on formalized policies and procedures, establish and follow rules, verify in writing</li> <li>• Take more moderate calculated risks</li> <li>• Inhibit new product development, facilitate implementation stage through risk aversion and tight controls</li> <li>• Stronger resistance to change</li> <li>• Stronger desire to establish rules allowing predictability of behavior</li> <li>• Show less tolerance for breaking rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal interactions with others</li> <li>• Rely on word of others they trust</li> <li>• Less concerned with orderliness and maintenance of records</li> <li>• Rely on informal interactions and informal norms</li> <li>• Less calculating when taking risks</li> <li>• Facilitate new product development</li> <li>• Show less resistance to change</li> <li>• Show less desire to establish rules to dictate behavior</li> <li>• More tolerance for breaking rules</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 618), based on Table 19-1.

***Humane orientation.*** “The degree to which a collective encourages and rewards individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring, and kind to others” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). It is interesting to note that House and colleagues made a correlation between the lack of humane orientation and the wealth of a nation.

In societies that lack formal welfare institutions, where resources are very unevenly distributed and where political power is often unstable, a system of patronage based on relationships of family and friends emerges to fulfill some needs of individuals. (Wolf, 1966, p. 566)

In Table 2-4 the cultural characteristics are described for Humane Orientation.

***Collectivism I (institutional collectivism).*** “The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). Table 2-5 demonstrates the cultural characteristics of high collectivism and low individualism characteristics

Table 2-4

*Humane Orientation Cultural Characteristics*

High humane orientation characteristics:	Low humane orientation characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interests of others are important.</li> <li>• People are motivated primarily by a need for belonging and affiliation.</li> <li>• Members of society are responsible for promoting the well-being of others.</li> <li>• Children expected to care for parents</li> <li>• People are urged to be sensitive to all forms of racial discrimination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One's own self-interest is important.</li> <li>• People are motivated primarily by a need for power and material possessions.</li> <li>• The state provides social and economic support for individuals' well-being.</li> <li>• Children not expected to care for parents</li> <li>• People are not sensitive to all forms of racial discrimination.</li> </ul>

*Note.* From House et al. (2004, p. 570), based on Table 18-1.

Table 2-5

*Individualism and Collectivism Cultural Characteristics*

Organizations scoring high on collectivism characteristics	Organizations scoring low on individualism characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members assume that they are highly <i>interdependent</i> with the organization.</li> <li>• Group loyalty is encouraged, even if this undermines the pursuit of individual goals.</li> <li>• The society's economic system tends to maximize the interests of collectives.</li> <li>• Rewards are driven by seniority, personal needs, and/or within-group equity.</li> <li>• Critical decisions are made by groups.</li> <li>• Training emphasized more than selection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members assume that they are largely independent of the organization.</li> <li>• Pursuit of individual goals is encouraged, even at the expense of group loyalty.</li> <li>• The society's economic system tends to maximize the interests of individuals.</li> <li>• Rewards are driven very largely by an individual's contribution to task success.</li> <li>• Critical decisions are made by individuals.</li> <li>• Section emphasized more than training</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 459), based on Table 16-2.

***Collectivism II (in-group collectivism).*** “The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). The cultural characteristics of this dimension are represented in Table 2-6 in low and high characteristics.

Table 2-6

*Collectivism II (In-Group Collectivism) Cultural Characteristics*

High in-group characteristics:	Low in-group characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duties and obligations are important determinants of social behavior.</li> <li>• A strong distinction is made between in-groups and out-groups.</li> <li>• People emphasize relatedness with groups.</li> <li>• The pace of life is slower.</li> <li>• Love is assigned little weight in marriage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal needs and attitudes are important determinants of social behavior.</li> <li>• Little distinction is made between in-groups and out-groups.</li> <li>• People emphasize rationality in behavior.</li> <li>• The pace of life is faster.</li> <li>• Love is assigned great weight in marriage.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 454), based on Table 16-1.

***Assertiveness.*** “The degree to which individuals are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in their relationships with others” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). Table 2-7 shows the high and low cultural characteristics of the cultural domain of Assertiveness.

***Gender egalitarianism.*** “The degree to which a collective minimizes gender inequality” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). The low and high range of cultural characteristics of Gender Egalitarianism is exhibited in Table 2-8.

***Future orientation.*** “The extent to which individuals engage in future-oriented behaviors such as delaying gratification, planning, and investing in the future” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). The low- and high-cultural characteristics are demonstrated for future orientation in Table 2-9.

***Performance orientation.*** “The degree to which a collective encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). This particular dimension is not from Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) but formed because it was felt to be exceptionally important. Performance orientation cultural characteristics are exhibited in Table 2-10.

Table 2-7

*Assertiveness Cultural Characteristics*

High Assertiveness characteristics:	Low Assertiveness characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value competition, success, and progress.</li> <li>• Communicate directly and unambiguously.</li> <li>• Try to have control over the environment.</li> <li>• Expect subordinates to take initiative.</li> <li>• Build trust on basis of calculation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value cooperation and warm relationships.</li> <li>• Communicate indirectly; try to “save face.”</li> <li>• Try to be in harmony with the environment.</li> <li>• Expect subordinates to be loyal.</li> <li>• Build trust on basis of predictability.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 405), based on Table 15-1.

Table 2-8

*Gender Egalitarianism Cultural Characteristics*

High gender egalitarianism characteristics:	Low gender egalitarianism characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More women in positions of authority.</li> <li>• Less occupational sex segregation.</li> <li>• Similar levels of educational attainment for males and females.</li> <li>• Afford women a greater decision-making role in community affairs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer women in positions of authority.</li> <li>• More occupational sex segregation.</li> <li>• A lower level of female educational attainment, compared to that of males.</li> <li>• Afford women little or no decision-making role in community affairs.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 359), based on Table 14-2.

Table 2-9

*Future Orientation Cultural Characteristics*

High Future Orientation characteristics:	Low Future Orientation characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propensity to save now for the future.</li> <li>• Emphasize working for long-term success.</li> <li>• Organizations tend to be flexible and adaptive.</li> <li>• View material success and spiritual fulfillment as an integrated whole.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propensity to spend now, rather than save.</li> <li>• Prefer gratification as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Organizations tend to be inflexible and maladaptive.</li> <li>• View material success and spiritual fulfillment as separate, requiring trade-offs.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 193), based on Table 13-1.

Table 2-10

*Performance Orientation Cultural Characteristics*

High performance values the following	Low performance values the following
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development</li> <li>• Competitiveness and materialism</li> <li>• Feedback as necessary for improvement</li> <li>• What one does more than who one is</li> <li>• Direct communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Societal and family relationships</li> <li>• Harmony with the environment</li> <li>• Feedback as judgmental</li> <li>• Who one is more than what one does</li> <li>• Indirect communication</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 245), based on Table 12-1.

**Critique of Cultural Dimensions**

Hall (1976), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), and House et al. (2004) did not study culture from the perspective of education, although in recent years there have been many articles written about using cultural dimensions to design pedagogy and curriculum. Thomas and colleagues (2002) wrote about instructional designers failing to take culture into consideration when designing. They found that many instructors took the position of saying they were culturally neutral. But culture is not neutral and instructors who claim they teach in a neutral fashion are not aware of their own parochialism. The authors' response to such positions was that *neutrality is impossible* because culture is in everything.

The works of Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980) are considered to be classics. Each has contributed to cross cultural analysis and created frameworks for understanding culture. There are, however, limits to their work. Because Hall has been cited many times and across many different disciplines, it is hard to believe that his research, with regard to context, has never been published in a refereed journal. Nor is there any

evidence of the methodology he used. Currently, no one has been able to replicate his work (Cardon, 2008).

Hofstede (1980), who actually did the empirical work, is the one who is continually criticized (Cardon, 2008). By reducing the multiple complexities of culture into four categories (in his original work), or dimensions, they become very narrow and rigid. His work then becomes criticized as being essentialist (Ess & Sudweeks, 2005). And yet it is probably because Hofstede was able to pare down cultural differences into small categories, that his cultural dimensions are accessible across many disciplines.

The use of cultural dimensions such as those from Hall (1976), Hofstede (1980) and House and colleagues (2004) did not go unscathed. Distilling the complexities of culture into a few usable categories leads to stereotyping and to ignoring the numerous characteristics within a geographic area (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). The very reason cultural dimensions have been used ubiquitously, is also the reason they are not useful. Cultural dimensions create characteristics one can understand about various facets of a nation's culture and yet attempting to use them to understand an individual, a group or an organization could be calamitous. Hofstede has warned against applying national cultural dimensions to subnational levels (Hofstede, 1991, p. 253). How then can cultural dimensions be used? Other criticisms of using cultural dimensions are that they fail to capture the malleability of culture over time; and they ignore the cultural heterogeneity within a country; and in using them, one generally does not look for other explanations for behavior.

## **The Culturally Diverse Student**

For many years, the American educational system valued assimilation, or expecting the foreigner to fit in (Gay, 2002); to learn the norms of their new school, European American, while divorcing themselves from their own culture, which is usually very different. “This places them in double jeopardy—having to master the academic tasks while functioning under cultural conditions unnatural (and often unfamiliar) to them” (Gay, 2002, p. 114). Only in recent years has there been an interest in designing curriculum that would recognize differences in cultures.

Gay (2000), as a multiculturalist, gave a different view of culture, “...a dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, worldviews, and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives as well as the lives of others” (p. 8). She believed that how we teach and how we learn is directly affected by the culture that taught us how to think, what to believe in, and how to behave. She saw and understood culture from the perspective of the American K-12 classroom where diverse students were failing and then blamed for their failures.

Business schools address these issues by equipping students with an understanding of cultural differences through the works of researchers such as Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) and House and colleagues (2004), which in both cases define cultural dimensions. Cultural dimensions are criticized for condensing national cultures into a narrow understanding of people which too often leads to stereotyping. Kirkman and colleagues (2006) reviewed 180 empirical studies which incorporated the Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) framework and found that the majority of them ignored the

warnings given by Hofstede and Hofstede, to not apply cultural dimension characteristics to individuals. The question is then, how can cultural dimensions be used? Gilovich, Keltner, and Nisbett (2006) stated that if an attempt is made to assess individuals or small groups, as in this study, behavior is best understood by looking at specific characteristics and the context in which they appear. I use the national cultural dimensions to identify what the characteristics generally might be, give the mean scores for the clusters involved in my study, and then compare that with what I observe in individuals in the classroom, knowing that their national cultural dimensions may differ.

Muzychenko and Saeed (2004) extolled the use of cultural insights but also warn about stereotyping people. Their research suggested that cross-cultural competence in teaching is imperative and a dialectic perspective tempers cultural dimensions. They suggest that the most important tasks for an instructor are to use “Culturally appropriate curriculum design; culturally appropriate assessment design; multi-style teaching; and finding synergistic solutions that do not breach cultural protocols of any culture represented in the classroom” (p. 14).

Culture in the classroom is an issue and one that needs to be accounted for and addressed when designing curriculum. Too often, there is a camp of instructional designers who think that if they ‘localize’ content the matter is taken care of. They define localization as transcribing the words into local language. Localization is much more than about language. It is also about body language, expectations, status control and using local examples to scaffold the learning.



### **Are Accountants Different?**

There is speculation amongst researchers that the *discipline* will define the design of curriculum and may have its very unique approaches and learning outcomes. Meyer and Eley (1999) suggested that the epistemology of a discipline may affect the learner's perceptions, motivation, and experiences. Accounting education research utilizes learning concepts and language that are not found in the traditional instructional design courses. Throughout the 1990s and up to 2005, the American Accounting Association has put out literature reviews of accounting education articles found in several different accounting journals: *Journal of Accounting Education*, *Issues in Accounting Education*, *The Accounting Educators' Journal*, *Accounting Education: A Journal of Theory, Practice and Research* and *Accounting Education: An International Journal*.

### **Learning Styles**

In the last decade there have been journal articles written in the accounting field that discuss the learning styles of students from different countries. Hofstede's name can be found in almost all of the references. Many use four (sometimes five) cultural dimensions to frame and inform their work.

Auyeung and Sands (1996) did an exploratory study of learning styles of accounting students in three different countries. Their findings suggest that many authors such as Curry (1983), Kolb (1984); Messick (1976); Pask, (1976), Ramsden (1984), and Schmeck (1983) prefer Kolb's dimensions, which include only one of Hofstede's (1980) dimensions (individualism vs. collectivism). They discovered, as have

many others, that Hofstede's (1980) ideas about education were just ideas with no empirical evidence. Hofstede merely speculated about education using what he learned in the field about management. Their findings led Auyeung and Sands (1996) to select Kolb's learning model with its polar opposites for use: Active and reflective learning vs. concrete and abstract learning. Stout and Ruble (1994) also found that a lot of research on accounting education use Kolb's Learning Style Inventory.

Auyeung and Sands (1996) added assimilation versus accommodation to the learning styles. They report that the Eastern students are not inner directed but more likely to give priority to group goals, assimilation and rely on their reflective observations. Western students want action in their learning as well as individual work and have accommodating learning styles.

### **Cultural Environment**

Ryan and Hellmundt (2003) found that international university students report problems in their attempts to learn. The instructors likewise report that they feel ill-equipped to teach them. Instructors think that language and lack of academic skills are the source; however, students feel that the expectations as well as teaching and learning practices are the source. The use of acronyms, unfamiliar concepts, cultural concepts or anecdotes is problematic. They also found that there were often hidden codes and prompts in essay questions.

Han (2008) wrote a dissertation on the challenges found in the international classroom. She found that if the instructor is a nonnative English speaker, lecturing (as opposed to discussion) was the preferred method because of lack of speaking skills.

Leading a discussion, in which students can be more engaged with the learning material, is difficult and therefore not attempted. I also question whether Han found discussion difficult because she came from an educational system where it was not the norm.

Han (2008) offered a solution but tempered it with a cultural observation of which one must be sensitive. Enunciation should be slow and clear, with the realization that some cultures consider it impolite to open the mouth enough to show teeth or tongue; however, that is the only way to enunciate clearly so that everyone around understands. Teachers should not use idiomatic expressions and listening skills are vital. The instructional designer must be aware of cultural values that affect the instructors teaching and the students learning.

### **Cultural Pedagogy**

Are there different learning perceptions and learning patterns in different societal cultures? Cooper (2004) wrote about the enigma of the Chinese learner within the accounting field. His research posed the question of why Chinese learners often excel in accounting education despite apparently using a rote learning approach. He discussed the surface versus deep learner as it was introduced by Biggs (1976), Marton and Saljo (1976), and Pask (1976). Instruments were developed to identify surface and deep learning in students. What he found was that the Chinese student uses rote learning but that it really isn't *surface learning* for them because they use it to deepen understanding which is a *deep learning* method.

Cooper (2004) added achieving to the construct of *deep vs. surface* learning. He describes how Biggs (1976) used the words presage and product to describe factors a

student brings to the classroom and what the student takes away. The word *presage* identifies personal characteristics such as intelligence, personality, cognitive style and home background. Product refers to the student's objective (grades) or subjective (satisfaction) performance. Biggs (1976) found that *presage* and *product* had to do with deep and surface approaches for engaging in the context but that *achieving* had to be added to the factors to describe the differences in how they organized their time and working environment. He found that the Chinese memorize more but they do it in such a way as to *achieve* a deeper learning—thus the enigma.

### **Additional Factors**

Additional factors are explored that could contribute to the students learning with no apparent cultural or communication difficulties. The following topics will be discussed: multicultural education, heterogeneous teams, ethical codes, intercultural competence, a discussion about the Coptic and Muslim employees that work side by side in the Cairo office despite the historical abuse toward one another, classroom climate, languages, and, cultural intelligence.

### **Multicultural Education**

Much of the literature on multicultural education comes from the Western world. Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. have been debating the tenets of multicultural education since the 1960s. Multicultural education has come to mean many different things to different people. Some of the basic concepts consist of educational strategies for use by instructors to use with students to work through racial, ethnic,

cultural, gender issues, misunderstandings, and prejudices. The principles are often filled with educational experiences that positively reflect the diverse community it represents.

Educational systems throughout history have reflected the ideology of the dominant culture. History also tells us that the socioeconomic classes between peoples reflected different kinds of schooling. The rich and the poor were always separated by the place of their schooling and too often the quality of it. The poor schools are expected to make do with very little capital. For many different reasons the quality of education for all citizens has been debated and found to be important to a country's success and as a consequence, changes sought to help all citizens, rich and poor to become better learners. Multicultural education has had a part to play in this paradigm shift in history. One of its thrusts has been to eliminate racial prejudice and ethnocentric ideologies in the school systems.

**Historical perspective.** Multicultural education in the U.S. has its roots in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The movement sought to eliminate discriminatory practices in employment, housing, public facilities and education throughout the country. The civil rights movement eventually led to other marginalized groups being able to express their grievances and make demands for equal treatment.

One of the results of the American social movements in the 1960s and 1970s centered on educational curricula. The sociopolitical landscape allowed for theorists and practitioners to change the instructional practices that propagated generations of ethnocentrism in American classrooms. New programs were developed and new policies and practices were implemented that eventually led the way to the beginnings of

multicultural education (Gorski, 2000).

**Defining multicultural education.** Although many have defined multicultural education over the years, for the purposes of this research I will use the definition given by Banks and Banks (2001).

Multicultural education is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good. (p. xi)

This definition speaks to students of a society in general and not just to the K-12 student population, for which I thought multicultural education was derived. Banks and Banks (2001) identified five dimensions of multicultural education:

***Content integration.*** Content integration “...deals with the extent to which instructors use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline” (Banks & Banks, 2001, p. 20).

Studies have revealed that the importance of integrating content that is familiar to students helps them remember as a function of what is understood. In other words, learners remember information better when they can relate to it (Driscoll, 2000). Anderson, Spiro, and Anderson (1978) in discussing their research said that in order to comprehend new information there needs to be prior knowledge which the instructor builds on to remind students of what they already know. Too often learner difficulties in cross-cultural situations can be traced to insufficient general knowledge or the use of

knowledge that is not generally known to the diverse student.

***Knowledge construction.*** Knowledge construction is “...the extent to which instructors help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of references, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it” (Banks & Banks, 2001, p. 20).

The students in this study came to learn the accounting principles of an American company in order to do their job. Accounting principles are created and therefore subject to frames of reference and cultural assumptions, perspectives and biases, but they are not being taught as the only way of all ways, just the way this particular company has chosen to do business. In this regard, knowledge construction is not significant.

***Prejudice reduction.*** Prejudice reduction “...describes lessons and activities instructors use to help students develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups” (Banks & Banks, 2001, p.6)

What method does AWT use to develop positive interracial attitudes and actions? Allport (1979) listed four core elements that he called *contact hypothesis*: Equal status, cooperation through common goals, institutional support and interaction. Prejudice is something everyone combats and negative attitudes and misperceptions about “others” are natural in that when not enlightened we all are parochial. It appears that the AWT workplace does create the conditions for prejudice to be reduced through positive cross-cultural interactions and ethics training.

***Equity pedagogy.*** Equity pedagogy “...exists when instructors modify their

teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, gender, and social-class groups” (Banks & Banks, 2001, p. 6).

Do the instructors use different learning styles in order to accommodate everyone in the classroom? This means that the instructors must develop cultural awareness and understanding of the cultures in the classroom so they can choose the most appropriate teaching strategies. Several of the instructors did use different strategies that appeared to bring all of the students into engagement.

***Empowering school culture.*** Empowering school culture “...describe[s] the process of restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups will experience educational equality and cultural empowerment” (Banks, 1995, p. 7).

A student can experience equality in the classroom but racism somewhere else in the building such as in the cafeteria, or when trying to access the elevator. The school culture in the Cairo center refers to the teaching staff and the classrooms where the teaching takes place, but there is an extension of other people that surround the classroom such as the janitors, the administration, and other employees working in the same building but who are not attending the conference.

**Another definition of multicultural education.** Banks and Banks (2001) also discussed multicultural education within a global context.

Multicultural education is a continuing process because the idealized goals it tries to actualize—such as educational equality and the eradication of all forms of discrimination—can never be fully achieved in a human society. Multicultural education, which was born during the social protest of the 1960’s and 1970s, is an international movement that exists in various nations on the European continent and in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada. A major goal of multicultural



education is to help students to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function within their own microcultures, the U.S. macroculture, other microcultures, and within the global community. (p. 25)

Words by Ladson-Billings (2003) added to the definition.

Indeed, what we now call multicultural education also is a composite. It is no longer solely race, or class, or gender. Rather, it is the infinite permutations that come about as a result of the dazzling array of combinations human beings recruit to organize and fulfill themselves. Like jazz, no human being is ever the same in every context. The variety of “selves” we perform have made multicultural education a richer, more complex, and more difficult enterprise to organize and implement than previously envisioned. (p. 50)

**Multicultural education in business.** The basic premise of cultural education is that all students should be given the same opportunity to excel in school. Although the literature often uses the words “organization” or “society” it appears to me that the K-12 and tertiary schools are what is meant by “organization” and “society,” and not business training or a company’s educational training series. I have yet to discover a discussion that bridges multicultural education and business. Multicultural education has done a lot to bring equality to the K-12 classroom and therefore I feel that it should also be used to frame the kinds of educational classes and trainings offered by a business. Businesses today are also feeling the same cultural heterogeneity that the schools are experiencing; therefore, multicultural education will be looked at for this research.

### **Heterogeneous Teams**

The outcome of putting together heterogeneous teams, according to Earley and Mosakowski (2000), can be successful. If the members of a team are homogeneous they have many things in common and rely on those attributes to navigate through a problem. The mildly heterogeneous team tends to break up into familiar subgroups; whereas the

totally heterogeneous team has few commonalities so they attempt to establish a new shared understanding which includes defining member status, expectations, and processes. Earley and Mosakowski (2000) stated, “Hybrid culture depends upon group understanding emerging from team member interaction. Unlike a homogeneous or moderately heterogeneous team, a highly heterogeneous team cannot easily fall back on a preexisting identity or on subgroup identities, because few commonalities exist” (p. 29).

A definition from Tyran and Gibson (2008), defined the accountants as a group of heterogeneous people belonging to a ‘team’ in the sense that they are the accountants for AWT (independent workers who recognize themselves as a team), and are responsible for keeping the company financially healthy (mutually accountable for a common objective; p. 48). They may not always be interdependent in their day to day job description, but while they are in Cairo, or at any of the designated learning centers, they are interdependent as they learn procedures and processes together.

Tom, the AFO (Accounting Financial Officer), spoke to them as though they were a team, reminding them that they are not only responsible for all of the finances at AWT but they are all accountable for the financial health of AWT. At one point during the conference he separated them out from the rest of AWT employees and told them they did a superior job in a particular aspect.

### **Ethical Codes**

AWT requires that the people involved in this study go through ethics training every year, which possibly contributes to diverse cultures’ ability to get along. In a study by Valentine and Fleischman (2002) their hypothesis states “Individuals employed in

organizations that have an ethics code are more tolerant of diversity than are those employed in organizations that do not have an ethics code” (p.303). Their conclusion was that “Ethics codes not only provide order to the organizational environment, but they also appear to define some societal expectations about diversity” (p. 308). They also suggest that ethical situations have to be noticed before decisions regarding them are made. (p. 308).

Figure 2-1 represents a recent notice that went out to employees at AWT. To get an idea of what is in the ethics training, I found the following on the internet, from presentation slides offered by AWT.

The code sets manners of dealing with clients, in order to serve them in the most efficient way, and provide accurate information without deception, in addition to rules against discriminating between clients based on their status, or religious or political beliefs. It also indicates how to treat confidential information, and abstaining to declare or comment on issues still under process inside.

All of the participants of this study are subject to an ethics code training every year that includes *societal expectations about diversity*. This type of training adds to the ability of the students to tolerate diversity. Being able to tolerate diversity will add in small part to the student’s ability to accommodate for cultural differences in a classroom.

**POLICY-REMINDER**

02/03/2010

Subject: Annual Requirement of One-Hour Ethics Training for Filers of Financial Disclosure Reports

This notice announces the annual ethics training requirement for all who file financial disclosure reports. All filers must comply with existing law by completing one hour of ethics training every calendar year. Live training is required by policy and regulator for most years. Ethics training sessions are also open to non-filers.

*Figure 2-1. Ethics training notice for AWT employees.*

## **Intercultural Competence**

Another factor that may have contributed to the conference participants succeeding as learners could be intercultural competence. As Deardorff (2006) suggested, there are many different names for the synonym used to describe a person who can successfully negotiate across cultures. Her research described terms she discovered as used by other scholars: Acculturation, cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural sensitivity, multicultural competence, transcultural competence, global competence, cross-cultural effectiveness, international competence, global literacy, global citizenship, cultural competence, cross-cultural adjustment, and intercultural competence.

Deardorff's (2006) dissertation was about defining and assessing intercultural competence for use in American universities. She used both international participants as well as national (American) participants to come up with a definition.

Knowledge of others; knowledge of self; skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact; valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviors; and relativizing one's self. Linguistic competence plays a key role.... Five components: World knowledge, foreign language proficiency, cultural empathy, approval of foreign people and cultures, ability to practice one's profession in an international setting.... The top three common elements were the awareness, valuing and understanding of cultural differences, experiencing other cultures, and self-awareness of one's own culture. These common elements stress the underlying importance of cultural awareness, both of one's own as well as others' cultures. (p. 182)

Cultural competence means having the capability and the will to interact effectively with the unique needs of clients, employees or students across multiple cultures. This requires skill, knowledge, and awareness and is usually developed over years.

### **Coptics Versus Muslims**

The religious groups that make up the Cairo team exemplify tolerance for diversity. Historically, Coptic Christians, and Muslims have lived together, side by side for a long time, but not very peacefully. The week following the conference there was an incident in Marsa Matruh, a seaport city in northern Egypt. A group of young Muslim extremists threw firebombs at the Coptic center and at nearby homes because they were angry about a new fence erected around the center.

Another incident, which affected many Coptic Christians, happened during the time that this study was going on. There was a great health threat to the world called the Swine flu or H1N1. Muslims do not eat or have anything to do with pigs or pork. Coptic Christians earn income from pig farming. The pigs are used in Garbage City (Zabaleen, Arabic for Garbage City) to consume 60% of organic garbage. In reaction to the Swine flu epidemic, Egyptian officials made the animals illegal and slaughtered them even though there was no evidence that the disease was spread by pigs (Seedling, 2009, p. 43). I spoke with one of the team members, a Muslim man, who almost lost his son to this disease. He never implicated his Christian colleagues and no evidence of the tension created in the country was evident in the office.

### **Classroom Climate**

Classroom climate is a critical component to success in a culturally diverse classroom. "Pedagogical actions are as important as (if not more important than) multicultural curriculum designs in implementing culturally responsive teaching" (Gay, 2002, p. 109). This is where, I believe, the Cairo instructors excelled in this study. They

did not realize they were using *cultural scaffolding*. Gay (2002) defined this as:

Demonstrating culturally sensitive caring and building culturally responsive learning communities. Instructors have to care so much about ethnically diverse students and their achievement that they accept nothing less than high-level success from them and work diligently to accomplish it.... (p. 109)

The interviews revealed just how much work goes into each training conference.

The instructors are very thorough in updating material. During the interviews, all of the instructors discussed how they were able to continually update the material because it was online in a central location. They had developed an algorithm for making sure all new information was collected and placed in the training without duplication. For several weeks prior to a conference they review the updated material and incorporate it into their lessons, working late into the night, making sure the students are getting the best possible education that they know how to give. Then during the conference, no one takes a break, or even goes out to explore the fascinating country they might be visiting until the week is over. They will be found working through the night perfecting their presentation skills, even after having taught this course several times before, and even though this is the work they do every day of their lives. It appears that they care about the students learning.

To demonstrate the compassion one instructor had, I share the following experience: At the February conference the difference between the pretest scores and the posttest scores (referred to as gain scores) were high and yet were lower compared to other conferences in the past. Redji, an instructor of the Voucher Exam course, cried when she saw the drop in gain scores. Redji was taking full responsibility for “doing something wrong.” It was very hard to console her. She did everything she could think of

to make sure all of her students were learning. What led to a lower gain score was that the students in this particular course were scoring higher in the pretest than any of her previous courses. It took a bit of discussion to help her see that she had not failed the students.

### **Languages**

The participants of these conferences are all fluent in at least two languages, which more than likely also contributes to their broadened cultural aptitude (Banning, 2010). They work for an American company and so they have invested a certain amount of their psyche to that condition, and accept that learning the American perspective of accounting is required for their jobs as is also speaking English fluently (not their native tongue).

### **Cultural Intelligence**

Earley and Ang (2003) defined CQ as “a person’s capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context” (p. 9). CQ is a relatively new construct developed for the business world and is a multidimensional construct of four intertwined dimensions. Table 2-11 presents the list of cultural intelligence dimensions and the descriptors of each dimension. The discussion that follows describes those dimensions and their descriptors.

**Metacognition.** Metacognition is a dimension of CQ that was later added by Ang and colleagues (2007) and refers to the information processing used to acquire and understand knowledge. The following are descriptors of metacognition.

Table 2-11

*Earley and Ang (2003) CQ Dimensions and Descriptors*

Dimensions	Descriptors
Metacognition	Inductive reasoning Analogical reasoning Self-awareness
Cognition	Declarative knowledge Procedural knowledge Conditional knowledge
Motivation	Self-efficacy Self-enhancement Self-consistency
Behavior	Repertoire of behaviors Culturally intelligent behaviors Positive self-presentation

*Note.* Adapted from Earley & Ang (2003).

*Inductive reasoning* predicts new social contexts that help to interpret ambiguous and misleading cues often experienced in a cross-cultural encounter.

*Analogical reasoning* predicts new social contexts as they transfer knowledge and experience across cultures.

*Self-awareness* is a filter for interpreting the cultural environment. When we see ourselves and how we think we are able to influence how we acquire, process, and react to social situations.

**Cognition.** Cognition is another dimension of CQ. Cognizance of different cultures norms, practices and conventions can be learned through education or experience. This knowledge helps one to understand a society's culture and the systems that shape cultural patterns which, in turn, enables one to interact with people from a different culture. The following represents the descriptors of cognition.

*Declarative knowledge* refers to knowing about things within a culture.



*Procedural knowledge* refers to how to do things within a culture.

*Conditional knowledge* refers to how and why people do what they do.

**Motivation.** Motivation, another dimension of CQ, is needed to trigger the efforts and energy needed to function in a new cultural setting. The following list represents the descriptors of motivation.

*Self-efficacy* is the perception that one can accomplish a particular thing.

*Self-enhancement* supports a positive self-image.

*Self-consistency* is when a person desires to maintain the status quo and adjust new settings to their pre-existent experiences and cognitions.

**Behavior.** This last dimension of CQ is defined as being able to act appropriately both verbally and nonverbally in a different culture. The following three descriptors belong to the behavior dimension.

*Repertoire of behaviors* is the use of individual cues and behaviors learned from others to infer their state of mind and their views in order to navigate different cultural environments.

*Culturally intelligent behaviors* as defined by Earley and Ang (2003) differentiate between cultural intelligence and cultural competence. Intelligence requires purpose, motive-orientation, and strategy as opposed to competence, which Earley and Ang described as passive and not necessarily conscious.

*Positive self-presentation* is the ability to want to give the best impression of yourself and do it by influencing the beliefs and feelings the cultural other holds for you.

## History of CQ

Earley and Ang (2003) wrote a book, *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions across Cultures* that responded to Sternberg and Detterman's (1986) writings about multidimensional perspectives of intelligence. It is a theory found in management and organizational psychology that describes a person's ability to engage successfully in a culturally diverse setting. Cultural intelligence also has a psychometric measure which has been validated through research. In the October issue of *Harvard Business Review*, Earley and Mosakowski (2004) wrote an article about CQ that described ways to develop this intelligence. The cognitive aspect implies learning about one's own culture as well as the cultures of others; a physical aspect where the senses are used to adapt both movements and body language to blend in; and a motivational aspect where the emotions are invoked by gaining rewards and strength from acceptance and success. The higher a person's CQ the more able they are to successfully blend into or engage in any diversely cultural situation.

Earley and Mosakowski (2004) concluded:

Why can some people act appropriately and effectively in new cultures or among people with unfamiliar backgrounds while others flounder? Our anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that the answer doesn't lie in tacit knowledge or in emotional or social intelligence. But a person with high CQ, whether cultivated or innate, can understand and master such situations, persevere, and do the right thing when needed. (p. 48)

When looking for reasons of why the students in the Cairo Conference were able to learn despite the cultural challenges they faced, CQ became a viable consideration. Since the first writings about CQ, there have been research projects that attempt to identify the variables of those who possess CQ. A study by Banning (2010) looked at

certain variables: Gender, degree level, degree major, and prior travel abroad, in order to predict CQ. In his conclusions, Banning states that gender had no statistical significance in predicting cultural intelligence whereas the other three variables were shown to have significant predictability. A person's degree was statistically significant for all four factors of CQ and a person's major significantly predicted cognitive, motivational, and overall cultural intelligence. The last one, prior travel abroad, was significantly related with behavioral cultural intelligence

Recent studies concerning expatriates and international executives found that CQ is related to a number of positive personality traits such as better mental adjustment and wellbeing (Kim, Kirkman, & Chen, 2008; Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2008; Ward & Fischer, 2008), less burn out (Tay, Westman, & Chia, 2008), more retention (Shaffer & Miller, 2008), adaptive performance (Oolders, Chemysenko, & Stark, 2008), and better expatriate performance (Ang et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2008; Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2006). Little research has investigated the validity of CQ in the field of education.

### **Summary**

The literature review for this study suggests that deeply ingrained cultural characteristics become problematic when teaching to a diverse population of students when the schooling process operates with one cultural model to the exclusion of all others, or when culturally different students are expected to set aside all their cultural habits as a condition for succeeding in learning. Conceptual frameworks discussed in the

literature review suggest that in order to ascertain first what the cultural characteristics were of the student population, cultural dimensions, as purported by Hall (1976), House and colleagues (2004), and Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) were used to identify the sort of characteristics that might be present in the classrooms. Finally, additional factors were identified which may have contributed to the successful learning of participants (ethics training, heterogeneous teams, intercultural competence, cultural intelligence [CQ], language, religion, and classroom climate).

### **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Over the last 50 years, the research on cultural dimensions has become much more widespread. Educators generally agree that there is a difference between behaviors, characteristics and expectations of people from different cultures that can affect both the instructor and the student negatively if not accommodated for and understood (Banks, 1995; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2003).

This case study was intended to shed light on how an American company constructed a teaching center that taught to a diverse population of students from around the world without overt concern for their students' broad cultural differences.

The pilot study analyses of the gain scores (the difference between the pretest scores and the posttest scores) suggested that the lack of regard for cultural diversity in the classroom had not negatively impacted the posttest scores. Success, as defined by the instructors and AWT officials, did occur.

As noted in Chapter II, the purpose of this qualitative case study (Stake, 1995) was to explore how instructors taught to a culturally diverse student population and to discover factors that might have contributed to the student's ability to learn and attempt to understand what made the instructors feel successful, by exploring their definition of success. Interview questions were designed to elicit the context, the experience and the meaning instructors made of their experience. To obtain the information sought, I used an in-depth interview approach discussed later in this chapter.

### **Research Questions**

In order to elicit an understanding of how the culturally diverse training classrooms were conducted, the following five questions were developed that guided the research. They were created after reviewing the literature and after conducting the pilot study in October 2009.

1. What strategies, behaviors, or personal characteristics are used by instructors that accommodate for cultural differences?
2. Do instructors experience difficulties or frustrations in teaching that could stem from national cultural differences?
3. Do students appear to experience difficulties or frustrations in learning as a consequence of national cultural differences?
4. Will the students show significant improvement in learning course content from pretest to posttest?
5. What additional factors contribute to the success or failure of the training?

### **Research Design**

The nature of this dissertation is qualitative research. Defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) as

...a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings,

attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

Under the umbrella of qualitative research, this dissertation was considered a descriptive case study (Stake, 2005), because it is a natural fit for exploring the nature of teaching to diverse students within a cultural dimension paradigm in a specific setting. This research design is valuable in acquiring detailed information about the cultural values and behaviors of the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005); examines the complexity of the situation (Creswell, 2007), and seeks to illuminate how the instructors succeeded (according to their own standards). Instruction and interaction strategies of seven instructors were observed in order to obtain a greater understanding of how intercultural and multicultural considerations factored into their teaching. The students were from 16 different third world countries, all of whom spoke English as a second or third language.

This case study explored a bounded system (Stake, 1995), which consisted of a week-long conference during February 2010, where AWT employees taught other AWT employees and took place in Cairo, Egypt. It incorporated the following distinct phases: Pilot study (interview of instructors in October 2009, which marked the end of a year of teaching); statistical analysis of students' pretest and posttest scores; collection of student demographics; collection of instructor demographics; one week of classroom observations; and interviews/debriefing of instructors after conference.

### **The Interview**

Creswell (2007) identified the importance of maintaining direction in an interview

by making use of an interview protocol. A 13-question interview protocol (see Appendix D) was created for the purpose of this study. This type of interviewing technique allowed for the consistent investigation of particular topics. The basic preconceived questions acted as springboards for further exploration, thus allowing for much needed flexibility with the participant in order for natural conversation to take place.

For purposeful sampling, seven instructors were interviewed: Two who taught the Voucher Exam course, three who taught the General Ledger course, and two (the CAO) and a trainee who taught in both courses. According to Creswell (2007), purposeful sampling “means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (p. 125).

The interviews occurred over several days in the week following the conference, for which AWT in Cairo provided a cubicle (see Appendix B for IRB approval). The sequence and order of the questions were not always the same. These semi-structured interviews allowed me to collect data on how the instructors felt about their role as an instructor, the difficulties they felt they encountered and what they thought led to their alleged success. Some questions were skipped if the interviewer felt they had already been answered. Extra clarification questions or probes were used when the answers were not sufficient. There was an audio recording made of the interviews of each participant that lasted about twenty minutes each. The instructors signed the consent forms after I explained the study and assured the trainers of confidentiality.

Fontana and Frey (2005) discussed the importance of establishing trust in an



interview situation: “Gaining trust is essential to the success of the interviews” (p. 708).

To illustrate the gradual process I went through to establish trust, I give the following account: In August of 2008, I began my working relationship with the Cairo office through telephone calls, e-mails, and the use of a wiki. Wiki use was novel to the Cairo office and fear that important information was visible to the world became their greatest concern; however, after a discussion with their IT team, they were assured that it had as much security as e-mails did and they began to use it. In November of 2008, I travelled to Cairo in order to physically meet and work with the Cairo team; unfortunately, it was not until a second face-to-face meeting with this team, almost a year later, in October of 2009, that they began to demonstrate trust in me. Previously, I was denied access to email addresses, evaluations, or gain scores of the participants. During the October 2009 visit, I was given full access to these data.

### **Observations**

Because the majority of instructors have told me on several occasions that they are not “instructors,” and do not want to be called instructors but rather colleagues, and have admitted that they never had any training to be instructors, I felt it crucial to observe them in action. Observations gave me useful information that could not have come from answers to a quantitative survey. A discussion of the observations can be found in Chapter IV.

## Timeline

Table 3-1 represents the time-line of the data I collected for this dissertation.

## Presentation of Data

Yin (2003) presented four tenets of a high quality analysis built into the research study design and used as a guide to ensure quality:

- Attend to all the evidence
- Address all major rival interpretations
- Address the most significant aspect of the case study
- Utilize the researcher's prior expert knowledge. (p. 137)

Table 3-1

### *Timeline of Data Collection*

Time	Event	Activity
August-November 2008	Begin work with AWT	Design courses for General Ledger & Voucher Exam
		Deliver material to Cairo
December 2008		Train Trainers
		Observe inaugural conference
January—October 2009	Courses are taught at regional centers around the world	
October 2009	Pilot Study	Interview Instructors that taught courses around the world
		Collect and Analyze pre-posttests and student evaluations
December 2009	Return to Cairo for further work with AWT	Train trainers
		Teach Camtasia
February- March 2010	Collect data for dissertation	Observations
		Interviews
		Pre and Posttests
		Student Evaluations
		Field Notes

## **Gain Scores**

In order to determine how much the students learned during the conference, they completed a pretest in the first hour and then took a posttest with the same questions listed in a different format at the conclusion of the conference. For a graphic representation of the scores see Appendix F. They were instructed to not use real names but create a pseudonym for the pretest and posttest so that no one, not even the instructors, could identify who took the tests. Their pseudonym was also used for the end of course evaluations.

The differences between the pretest and posttest scores are referred to as gain scores and were used to determine the effect the independent variable (the course) had on the dependent variable (the measure of the student's achievement). If the course had an effect, it would be reflected as a change between the students' scores on the pretest and their scores on the posttest. Multiple problems of interpretation result when raw gain scores are used to measure the amount of change occurring as a result of training; however, in this study gain scores are used as a part of the picture in triangulation of data. Interpretations of the gain scores are discussed in the "Findings" chapter.

## **End-of-Course Evaluations**

The pilot study data involved the use of the end of course evaluations from the two courses being taught (Voucher Exam and General Ledger) throughout 2009, which occurred in six different regional centers around the world. This datum was compared to the end of course evaluations collected at the Cairo conference in February 2010. The results of this datum used to assess participant reactions to the learning experience, will

be discussed in the “Findings” chapter.

### **Interaction with Students**

I mingled informally with the students during breaks, asking them how they were doing and looking for their reactions to the conference. The notes I made were included in my analysis.

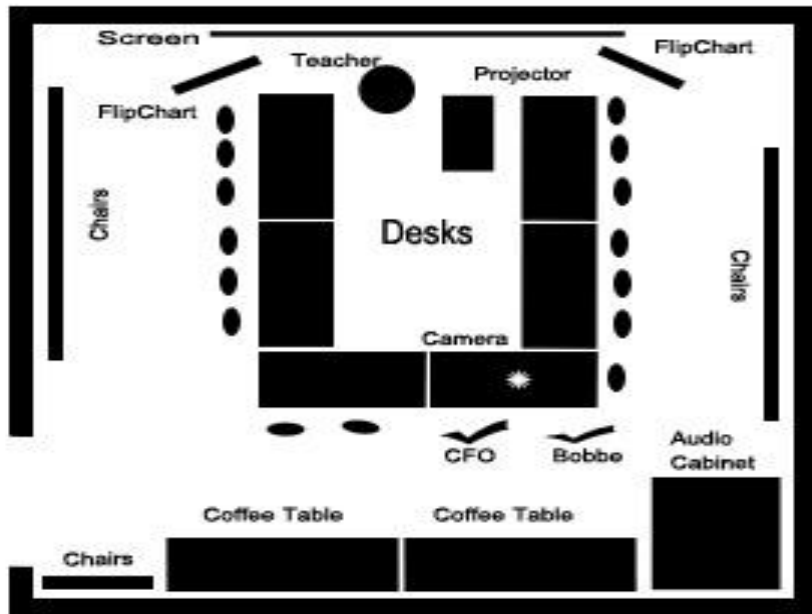
### **Field Notes**

For this study, field notes consisted of several different things: Visual graphs of the classrooms, notes during observations, comments brought to mind and notes from informal discussions.

### **Classroom A**

The classroom being used for the Voucher Exam was moved into a U-shaped configuration after the first class and is graphically represented in Figure 3-1.

A projector was placed at the front of the room at table level. Students sat all around the U with Tom (the CFO) and I sitting at the bottom of the U as noted in Figure 3-1. Occasionally students would sit next to the CFO. The instructor had access to everyone in the room and we could all see each other. Some of the students smiled and waved at each other from across the room, something they could not do when the desks only allowed for the looking at back of heads. The U-shaped configuration even made it easier to throw chocolate candies for rewards.



*Figure 3-1. Classroom A: Voucher exam classroom configuration.*

## **Classroom B**

The second classroom was located in the basement and was actually built for teaching. A graphical representation appears in Figure 3-2. The tables were configured in rows with an opening down the middle so the instructors could easily roam around the room. A table at the front of the class held the projector that projected the presentation slides onto the screen in the front of the room. The acoustics made instructor comments audible without any microphones. However, I did come to enjoy the U shape of Classroom A and felt that this room would also benefit from a similar configuration.

## **Logistics of Closure and Termination**

The closure of data collection came with the end of the conference one week, and

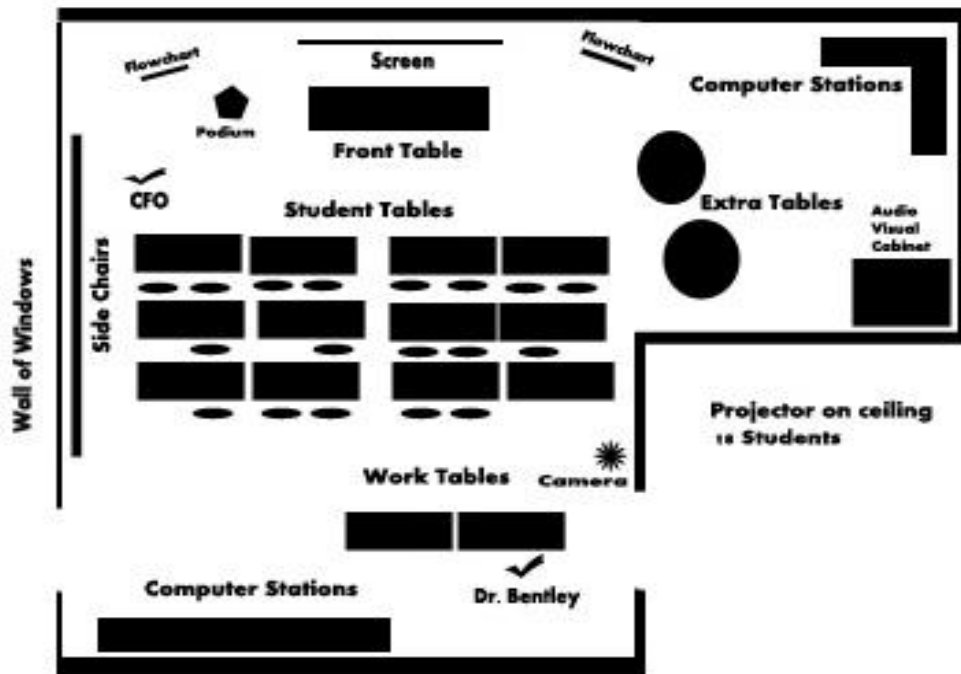


Figure 3-2. Classroom B: General ledger course.

interviews with instructors the following week. In summary, the final study consisted of a ten-day period in Cairo, Egypt, in February 2010.

### Role as Researcher

Gaining entry into the agency where I conducted my research was a long process. It began when I was the team leader of a group of students from the Jon Huntsman School of business and the Department of Instructional Technology at Utah State University. It was a year after this project began that I was finally allowed to study the trainers and trainees involved in the courses, as described earlier in this chapter.

## **Bracketing**

In order for the researcher to be more fully open, a process called bracketing is used. It requires that past knowledge is brought forward before encountering research. and allows the researcher to become aware of their own subjectivity, assumptions and vested interests and to consider how these might impact the research. Pre-understandings are both intended to be bracketed (set aside) as well as used as a source of insight (Ahem, 1999).

Bill Fullmer, a colleague, asked questions regarding my feelings toward people from multiple cultures and my feelings of the research topic. I recorded the interview conversation and then transcribed the data (see Appendix A).

The interview revealed my personal beliefs and biases, allowing me to temporarily suspend them while conducting interviews with instructors and making observations of the classrooms. A list of personal beliefs and biases follows.

- I believe an instructor must undergo purposeful skill building with regard to understanding their own cultural proclivities in order to understand the cultural characteristics and behaviors of others.
- I believe the most effective way of teaching students is through their participation in the learning process.
- I believe that teaching which does not take the cultural proclivities of students into consideration when creating curriculum or when interacting with students are subscribing to a form of assimilation, and that this is not effective for the heterogeneous populations in today's classrooms.
- I adapt easily in a culturally diverse situation which may make me unaware of how others might not adapt easily.

## **Conclusion**

The data gathered aided in the identification of the AWT instructors behaviors and teaching strategies, enabling me to understand why they felt successful in teaching and why their lack of knowledge regarding cultural dimensions appeared to make no difference to their ostensible teaching success.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

The instructors at AWT were not receptive to developing teaching techniques in response to the cultural differences of their students, citing that there were too many different cultures attending their classrooms and therefore would teach as they usually did. Their decision created a focus for this qualitative case study. This chapter reviews the demographic information about the instructors and the students and analyses their cultural characteristics as defined by cultural dimensions. The case study looks at the teaching practices to see how they aligned with the analysis of the students needs according to the cultural clusters from which they came. The teaching practices were also observed for tenets from the multicultural education concept.

Although Hall (1976), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), and House and colleagues (2004) did not create cultural dimensions for use within the field of education, they have been used extensively to help understand facets of cultural differences in the classroom. Three of Hofstede's (1980) five dimensions (which are also a part of House and colleagues' dimensions) are used in this study: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism plus one that modifies Hofstede's masculine/feminine dimension, gender egalitarianism.

When the name of the company, AWT, is brought up, the reaction among many is that they cannot get past the political function it takes on in the world. My study has deliberately avoided dealing with international politics but rather it examines crossing cultural boundaries without accommodating for cultural differences. After interviewing

the instructors, the CAO, and the controller at the Cairo office, I do not believe that the company had any influence on their actions to not accommodate for differences. It was a decision made by the CAO, who is not an American. Recall his statement from the “Introduction” chapter in which he says, “I don’t deal with people differently based on different cultures, we are all the same, we are all, you know, having the same target.” Without realizing it, he made accommodations for his students in ways that I was able to identify, but he was unable to name or understand why he did what he did. He just knew that it worked. The relationship he had with the instructors allowed them to willingly learn from him, and some appeared to model their teaching after him. However, two of the instructors reported difficulties that I believe was because they adhered to their own cultural proclivities.

## **Demographics**

### **Instructors**

The instructors are the focus of this investigation. Table 4-1 lists the names (I have created pseudonyms for them) of the instructors, their gender, the languages they speak, where they were born and the degrees they have obtained. There were other people who added to the teaching core as either representatives of the software program (two from the U.S.) or were students learning to train (one from Thailand and one from Uganda). These instructors were also observed but not included in the interviews, and therefore do not appear in this table. None of the instructors reported having formal training in how to teach. They all attended the ‘train the trainer’ courses provided by the

Table 4-1

*Instructor's Names, the Languages They Spoke, Place of Birth, University Degrees Obtained, and Courses Taught*

Instructor	Gender	Languages spoken	Degrees	Place of birth	Course taught
Amr	Male	English, Arabic, French	BA, CPA	Egypt	Voucher exam General ledger
Redji	Female	English, Arabic	BA	Egypt	Voucher exam
Kama	Female	English, Arabic	BA	Egypt	Voucher exam
Subira	Female	English, Arabic, French	Masters	Egypt	General ledger
Omorose	Female	English, Arabic, French	BA	Egypt	General ledger
Itet	Female	English, Arabic	BA	Sudan	General ledger
Mohammad	Male	English, Arabic	BA	Egypt	Voucher exam General ledger

*Note.* BA stands for Bachelor of Arts, CPA stands for certified public accountant.

USU team, but these trainings addressed eye contact, speaking distinctly, how to make and use presentation slides effectively, and so forth, and did not train specifically in how to deal with cultural diversity in the classroom.

**Instructors' nationality.** All of the instructors were Egyptian with only one being born in Sudan while her father served as a diplomat (therefore, she has Egyptian citizenship).

**Instructors' languages spoken.** All of the instructors spoke English and Arabic fluently and three also spoke French.

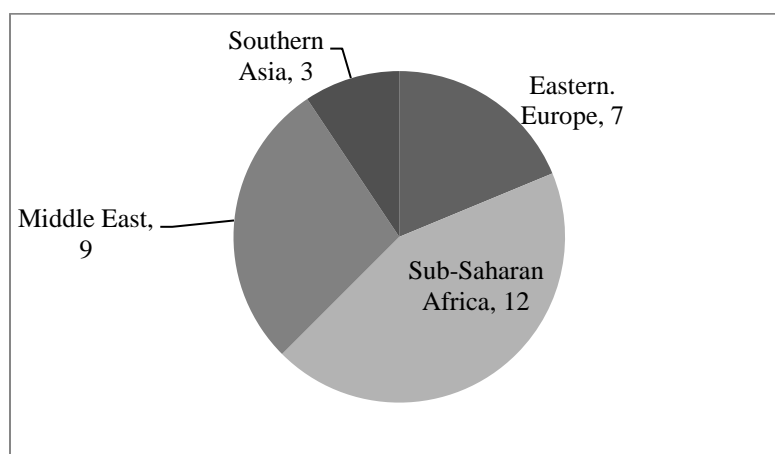
**Instructors' education level.** All of the instructors had a bachelor's degree, one obtained CPA status and one received a master's degree from Colorado, USA.

## Students

Thirty-one participants completed the survey (see Appendix E). There are 10 geographical clusters (as defined by House et al., 2004) around the world and only four of these clusters were represented from my study: Eastern Europe, Middle East, Southern Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Even though I can place the students within these clusters geographically, in many cases, House and colleagues did not have specific data for all the countries that were included in my study.

Figure 4-1 displays the four clusters represented in this study and the number of students from each cluster.

Table 4-2 lists the students by the country they were from, the languages they spoke and degree/s obtained.



*Figure 4-1.* Using House et al. (2004) clusters, there were four clusters represented in the study and each piece of the pie lists the number of students from that cluster.

Table 4-2

*Student Participants by Country, Languages Spoken, and Degrees Obtained*

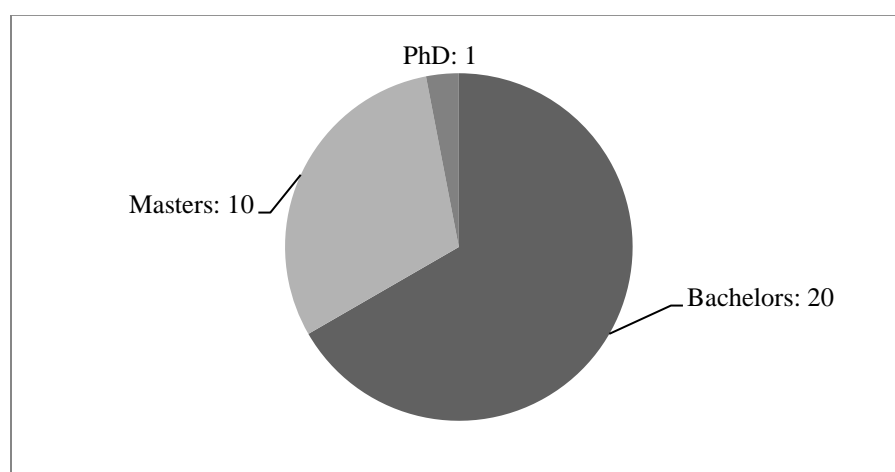
Country	Language	Degree	Country	Language	Degree
Bangladesh	Eng., Bangla, Hindi	Masters	Jordan	Eng., Arabic	BA
Bangladesh	Eng., Bangla	Masters	Jordan	Eng., Arabic	Masters
Benin	Eng., French	Masters	Kenya	Eng., Swahili, Dholuo	BA
Egypt	Eng., Arabic	BA	Kenya	Eng., Swahili	BA
Egypt	Eng., French, Arabic	BA	Kosovo	Eng., Albanian, Serbo-Croatian	Masters
Egypt	Eng., Arabic	BA	Nigeria	Eng., Nigerian	Associate
Egypt	Eng., Arabic	BA	Pakistan	Eng.,	BA
Egypt	Eng., German, Arabic	BA	Pakistan	Eng., Urdu, Punjabi	Masters
Ethiopia	Eng., Amharic	BA	Rwanda	Eng., French, Kinyarwanda	BA
Georgia	Eng., Georgian, German, Russian	BA	Serbia	Eng., Serbian	BA
Georgia	Eng., Georgian, Russian	BA	Tanzania	Eng., Swahili	Masters
Georgia	Eng., Georgian, Russian, Armenian	PhD	Tanzania	Eng., Swahili	Masters
Ghana	Eng., French	Masters	Thailand	Eng., Thai	BA
Ghana	Eng.	BA	Uganda	Eng., Ugandan	BA
Hungary	Eng. Hungarian	BA	Uganda	Eng.	BA
Hungary	Eng. Hungarian	BA			

*Note.* Eng. stands for English, Bangla stands for Bangladesh.

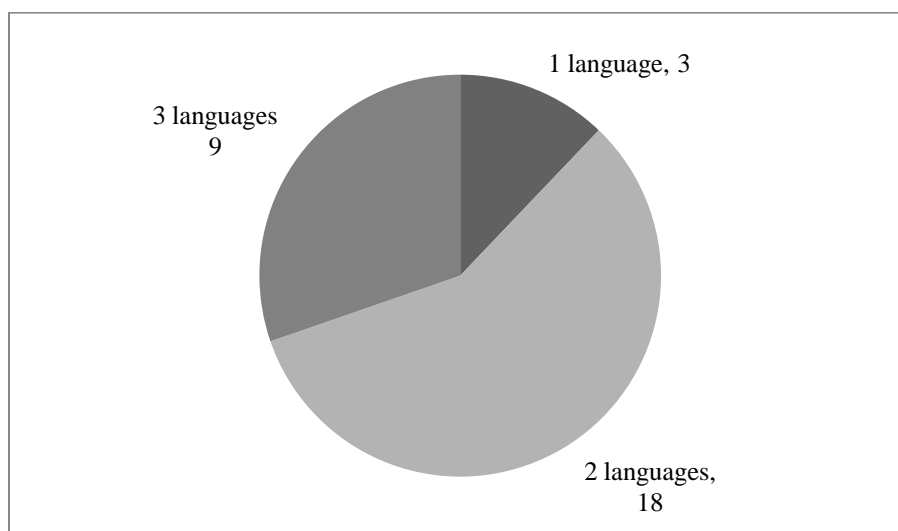
**Students' education level.** All of the participants had a bachelor's degree, one third had a master's degree, and one had a Doctorate degree. As we discovered in chapter 2, having a higher education helps one become more interculturally competent. In discussions with the students some had obtained their degrees from the U.S. and others had never been to the U.S. but had received their degrees at universities within their own

countries. The person holding a PhD told of how his research no longer was useful because the labs had closed down in his country, forcing him to make a career change. Even though such labs were available in other parts of the world, he had absolutely no desire to leave his family or his country. Figure 4-2 graphically shows the kinds of university degrees held by the students and how many hold them.

**Students' languages spoken.** All of the participants spoke at least two languages and sometimes three or four. Figure 4-3 graphically represents the number of students who speak different languages. Different dialects and accents made it difficult for me to understand some of them in their spoken English, but I never heard any of them complain about their being unable to understand the instruction, even if I asked them directly if they had any trouble understanding their instructors or other students. Maybe, as ESL speakers, they are more attuned to hearing than I am, or at least more forgiving and patient. Being multilingual also adds to intercultural competence.



*Figure 4-2.* University degrees held by students.



*Figure 4-3.* Number of different languages spoken by students.

### **Discussion of Demographics**

An important starting point for the discussion of demographics focuses on the definition of culture. Researchers have defined culture in many different ways, for instance, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) found 164 definitions. Two characteristics appear to emerge from the many definitions, first is that culture is not transmitted genetically but passed on through socialization from one generation to the next and it is often acquired in early childhood (Hall, 1976; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The second characteristic is referred to as mental software by Hofstede and Hofstede. This term has its roots in sociology and anthropology and is described as a collective phenomenon which includes patterns of thinking, feeling and acting or as Hofstede and Hofstede call it the “unwritten rules of the social game.” Cultural diversity has come about due to environment, according to Hofstede and Hofstede in that migration across our globe necessitated adaptation in the form of different cultural solutions to new natural environments. The

works of House and colleagues and Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) are used to frame the human behaviors that are identified as cultural. Both authors call them “cultural dimensions.”

It is acknowledged here that national culture is very complex and cannot really be reduced to a few variables such as cultural dimensions; nonetheless, these cultural dimensions are still the dominant cultural paradigm in use. Although the cultural dimensions are defined in the “Literature Review” chapter, they are summarized here according to how they are demonstrated in education. Long-term orientation, although a dimension of Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), is different from House and colleagues’ (2004) Future Orientation and is, therefore, not used here. Tables (4-3 thru 4-7) and Figures (4-4 thru 4-7), which are shown and discussed later, show that the data describe the cultural proclivities demonstrated by people from the geographical clusters that participants of this study belong to. The clusters are compared with each other and not against all other geographical clusters.

The tables represent the behaviors exhibited in a school setting as adapted from Hofstede and Hofstede’s (2005) educational view of dimensions. The graphs display the four clusters in this study and their mean score as reported by House and colleagues (2004) for that particular cultural dimension. After each cultural dimension is presented, I will describe the behaviors and strategies used by the instructors to teach and compare their actions with what the cultural dimensions say they should be like—acknowledging that individuals can be very different from the national cultural dimensions.



## Cultural Dimensions

### Uncertainty Avoidance

House and colleagues (2004) defined uncertainty avoidance as ‘the extent to which ambiguous situations are threatening to individuals, to which rules and order are preferred, and to which uncertainty is tolerated in a society’ (p. 602). Table 4-3 lists the differences between high and low uncertainty avoidance in a classroom.

Egypt is geographically in the Middle East cluster, which has a low Uncertainty Avoidance mean score compared to clusters outside of this study (Nordic and Germanic Europe, which have high mean scores). Eastern Europe also has a low mean score which indicates that students might not want much structure. There was an underlying structure to the conference in that certain subjects were delivered at certain times and in a certain order. However, there were open discussions, open-ended learning and stimulating

Table 4-3

#### *Student/Instructor Cultural Proclivities for Uncertainty Avoidance*

High range	Low range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly structured classroom</li> <li>• Precise objectives</li> <li>• Detailed assignments</li> <li>• Strict timetables</li> <li>• Teachers are suppose to have all the answers</li> <li>• Expect teachers to use cryptic academic language</li> <li>• Show stronger resistance to change</li> <li>• Show less tolerance for breaking rules</li> <li>• Strong desire to establish rules to predict behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not like structure</li> <li>• Like broad assignments and no timetables</li> <li>• Likes good discussions</li> <li>• Likes open-ended learning</li> <li>• Okay for teacher to say ‘I don’t know’</li> <li>• Disagreements between teacher and student are stimulating</li> <li>• Respect for use of plain language</li> <li>• Tolerance for breaking rules</li> <li>• Less desire to establish rules to dictate behavior</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 169).

conversations where students and instructors disagreed. Also, because of constant and unplanned interruptions, the schedule was subject to change. Three of the instructors admitted, during the interviews, that they did not like an unstructured classroom. Four of the instructors did tolerate an unstructured classroom. Figure 4-4 gives the mean score for the four clusters in this study and illustrates their differences graphically.

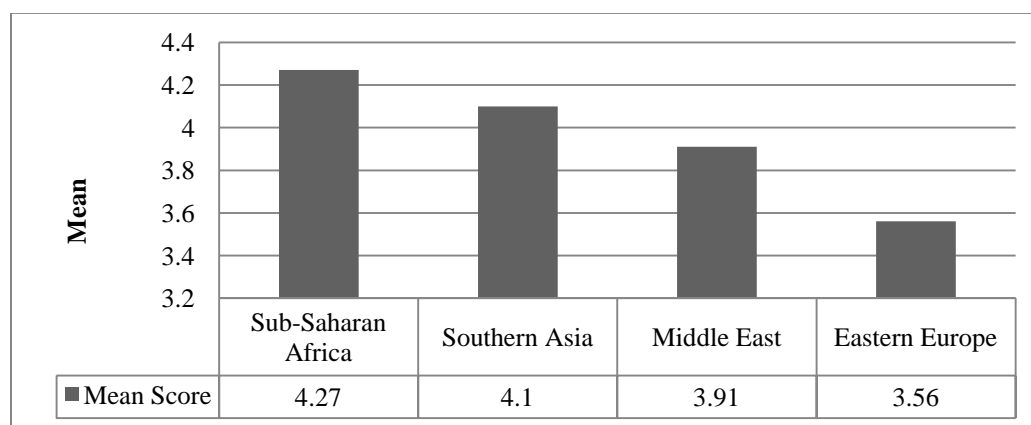
The instructors would also exhibit the ability to say freely that they do not always know the answers. During the interview with instructors, they reported no fear in not knowing the answers. For instance,

Me: Do you ever have any problems with not knowing the right answer?

Amr: No, if I don't know the right answer I say I don't know and I promise I will get back with them and usually I do. I am not assuming that I should know everything.

I watched students disagree with some of the answers given by the instructors.

One afternoon, when everyone seemed especially tired and quiet, a student told how he



*Figure 4-4.* Mean scores for cultural clusters of uncertainty avoidance. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 636).

did a particular procedure differently. Soon, other students began to share the same problem which differed from what the instructor was telling them. In some cultures, such disagreements would be unheard of, as in those who score high in power distance. The instructor graciously told them that he would get back to them after researching the matter. After the break, the answer was shared and the instructor admitted that the students were correct. In certain cultures, students would lose faith in the instructor for not knowing all of the right answers; however, at this conference Amr was not disrespected or treated with indignity for admitting his lack of knowledge of their specific problems. In the evaluations, where students had the opportunity to complain if they felt the instructors were not knowledgeable, there were no complaints.

One other characteristic of low uncertainty avoidance is the use of discussion during class time. Almost all of the classes exhibited a low uncertainty avoidance characteristic. However, I heard an instructor tell during an interview that she did not like open discussions. Dr. Bentley and I discussed this interview and came to the conclusion that this instructor's language skills and possible inability to understand and contribute to the discussion may have influenced her dislike of open discussions as discussed by Han (2008).

### **Power Distance**

As discussed in the Literature Review, this cultural dimension is about the way societies handle inequality. Table 4-4 lists the differences between large and small power distance within a classroom.

According to House and colleagues (2004), the four clusters of this study have

Table 4-4

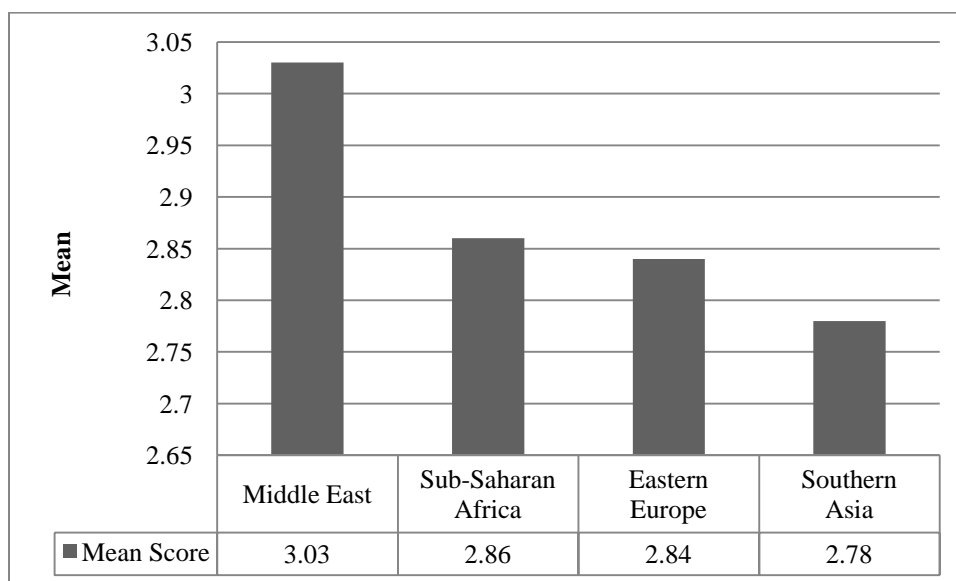
*Student/Instructor Cultural Proclivities for Power Distance*

Large Power Distance	Small Power Distance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depends on teacher</li> <li>• Teacher centered class</li> <li>• Highly personalized educational process</li> <li>• Teacher is treated with deference even outside of class</li> <li>• No arguing with teacher</li> <li>• Students only speak when invited to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher and student considered equal</li> <li>• Student is center of teaching</li> <li>• Student expected to take initiative in learning</li> <li>• Students do not fear asking questions</li> <li>• Students make uninvited interventions in class</li> <li>• Students do not fear arguing with teacher</li> <li>• Relationship between teacher &amp; student is impersonal</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 57).

mean scores that are in the middle in comparison to all other clusters as graphically displayed in Figure 4-5. A student from a small power distance country would not always fear arguing with the instructor and would probably have an impersonal type of relationship with the instructor. Although all four clusters in this study are considered to be in the middle, the Middle Eastern cluster demonstrates the highest power distance which was evident during the interviews.

Three of the instructors from Egypt initially said they wanted to be treated like a colleague during the Pilot Study, but during the February interview, and after they came to trust me, they admitted that only in certain circumstances did they like being treated as a colleague, but preferred a distance between themselves and the students. They also complained that they were uncomfortable with the students who seemed to question their authority. Their lack of ease could be attributed to cultural differences in expectations of behavior in the classroom. The students did not seem to have the same feelings in that no



*Figure 4-5.* Mean scores for cultural clusters of power distance dimension. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 548).

complaints came from the students in either the evaluations or during the informal conversations with students in which I asked this question of some of them.

### **Gender Egalitarianism**

Gender egalitarianism is described by House and colleagues (2004) as “the degree to which a collective minimizes gender inequality” (p. 30). Table 4-5 lists the potential differences in gender egalitarianism in a classroom setting. Figure 4-6 demonstrates graphically what the mean scores are for the four clusters in this study.

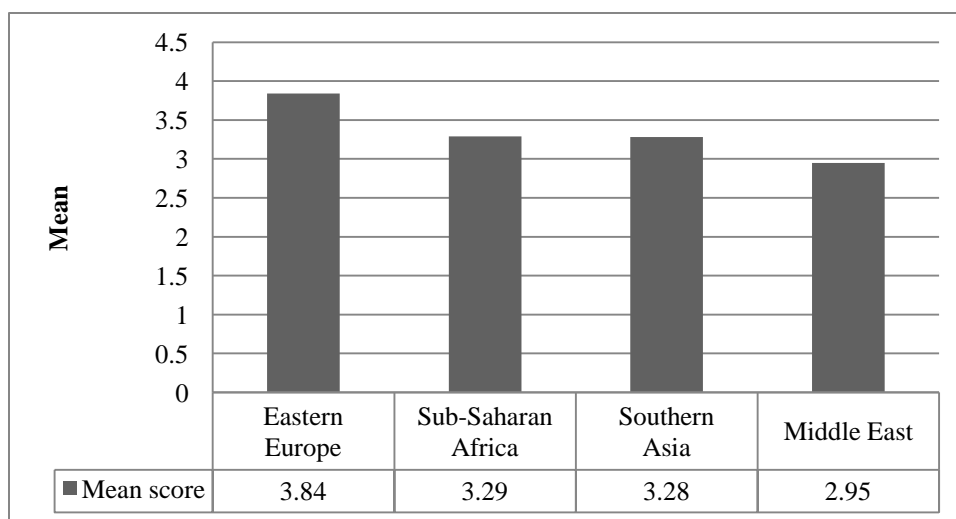
The high mean score of the Eastern Europe cluster shows them to be amenable to a feminist type of learning situation: Instructors praise weaker students to encourage them, the average student is the norm, assertive behavior is not acceptable, failure is a minor incident, aggression is avoided, instructors are expected to be friendly and sociable

Table 4-5

*Student/Instructor Cultural Proclivities for Gender Egalitarianism*

Masculine society	Feminine society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers do not praise students</li> <li>• Best students are the norm</li> <li>• Students try to make themselves visible</li> <li>• Failure is disastrous</li> <li>• Brilliance of teacher dominates</li> <li>• Women teach younger children</li> <li>• Men teach at universities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher praises weaker students to encourage them</li> <li>• Average student is the norm</li> <li>• Ridicule assertive behavior and excelling</li> <li>• Failure is a minor incident</li> <li>• Everyone avoids aggression</li> <li>• Teacher friendliness and social skills dominate</li> <li>• Mix of male/female teaching</li> <li>• Male/Female teach younger children</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 135).



*Figure 4-6.* Mean scores for cultural clusters of gender egalitarianism dimension. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 375).

and there is a mix of male and female instructors. Two of the clusters fall into the middle of the mean scores, with the Middle Eastern cluster being in the lowest category and the Eastern Europe cluster in the highest category. However, the majority of the instructors from the Middle East were women, with only two being male; nevertheless, the female instructors appear to defer strongly to the males and in fact there is a patriarchal tone that is ever present between the instructors. Two of the female instructors are very maternal and caring. It is possible that they have found that acting as a mother to the students is a more acceptable adaptation to teaching because they are women in a male dominated society. This demonstrates a cultural misfit for some of the students, but did not show up in comments or in their evaluations. (For evaluations see Appendix G.)

### **Assertiveness**

According to House and colleagues (2004), “Assertiveness is the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships” (p. 12). Table 4-6 lists the differences between high and low assertiveness characteristics.

Assertiveness was not one of the Hofstede (1980) cultural dimensions. Criticism about the Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) masculinity/femininity dimension suggests reliability and validity are at issue and that it actually encompasses two different subdimensions. That is why House and colleagues (2004) used gender egalitarianism and assertiveness as two discrete cultural dimensions. The Eastern Europe cluster had the second highest mean score for assertiveness while the other clusters in the study had mean scores in the middle. At the conference in Budapest (see Chapter I), a probable

Table 4-6

*Student/Instructor Cultural Proclivities for Assertiveness*

Higher assertiveness	Lower assertiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value assertive, dominant and tough behavior for everyone in society</li> <li>• Sympathy for the strong</li> <li>• Value competition</li> <li>• Direct and unambiguous communication</li> <li>• Explicit and to the point</li> <li>• Expressive, reveal thoughts and feelings</li> <li>• Stress equity, competition, and performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assertiveness is socially unacceptable</li> <li>• Sympathy for the weak</li> <li>• Value cooperation</li> <li>• Speak indirectly and emphasize “face-saving”</li> <li>• Ambiguous and subtle</li> <li>• Detached and self-possessed conduct</li> <li>• Stress equality, solidarity, and quality of life</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 405).

cultural conflict manifested in that the students from the Eastern Europe cluster would not participate or engage with the instructors. The following discussion took place during an interview with Kama and demonstrates their assertiveness. I asked her what her biggest challenge was as a trainer and this was her answer.

My biggest challenge as a trainer is when a new, you might be having this, not only in our playground (which is our country) but also this might also be given outside the country and the cultures you are talking different. They might not be cooperative; they might not interact with us the same we are used to having people interacting with us.

Here, Kama tells that the students in Budapest were asserting their feelings by not cooperating with a teaching strategy that they did not believe in.

Kama: Yeah, in one instance, especially when we went to Budapest. The people there were very cool. They were like not getting any impression. We were trying to push them to interact and answer and make it live. We like people to just react to us and to let us know that they already got the piece of information.

Me: You mean you would ask questions and they wouldn't even answer?



Kama: Yeah. They might like sitting, they don't care, "I know, but I will not answer." This is nothing but when you feel this you say to yourself "I am going to move them."

Figure 4-7 presents graphically, the mean scores for the four clusters in this study.

I asked the following question in response because I heard they danced in some of the conferences.

Me: Did you get up and dance?

Kama: Ah, sometimes we do dance, yeah, yeah, because in general people from different cultures are not familiar to that. They might see that you are making jokes of them so in the beginning you have to be very careful when dealing with people different than you, so you have to be careful first and then like one time we had "I am not going to dance in class." So you have to be careful in the beginning not to just jump and say that we are going to do that. You need to find a way to get to them to let them interact with you.

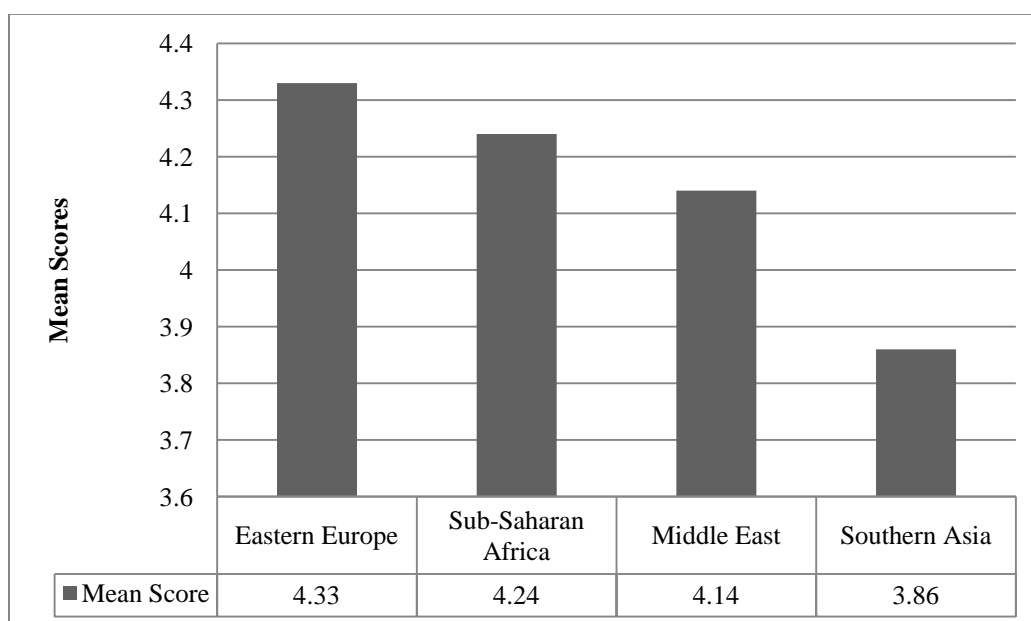


Figure 4-7. Mean scores for cultural clusters of assertiveness practices (as is). Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 423-424).

I asked Kama if they asked the students in Budapest to get up and dance

Kama: We tried this also in Budapest but they didn't. I MEAN THEY DIDN'T! Too serious. They were "Come on, what are you doing?" Amr even tried to talk to them and get them to stand up, just to move them.

Me: And they wouldn't even do that?

Kama: Yeah. You have to be careful.

Me: What did you do then?

Kama: Oh, we tried. Just to let them feel that we want you to just let us know if you receive the information. What else can you do? Just don't be scared to ask, be brave, and ask whatever you need.

Kama appeared to interpret their actions as being afraid to ask. It is possible that the student's "coolness" and unwillingness to engage with the instructors was an aggressive response, one that mimics contempt for the way they were being taught. To say to the instructors, "Come on, what are you doing?" is more than likely not a reflection of fear but of intolerance for be treated as children. Generally, the Eastern Europe student takes learning very seriously and playing games, getting rewarded with chocolate or dancing during classroom time are not behaviors with which they are familiar.

### **Institutional Collectivism**

Institutional collectivism is "The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action" (House et al., 2004, p. 30). Table 4-7 lists the characteristics of the individualist versus collectivist societies.

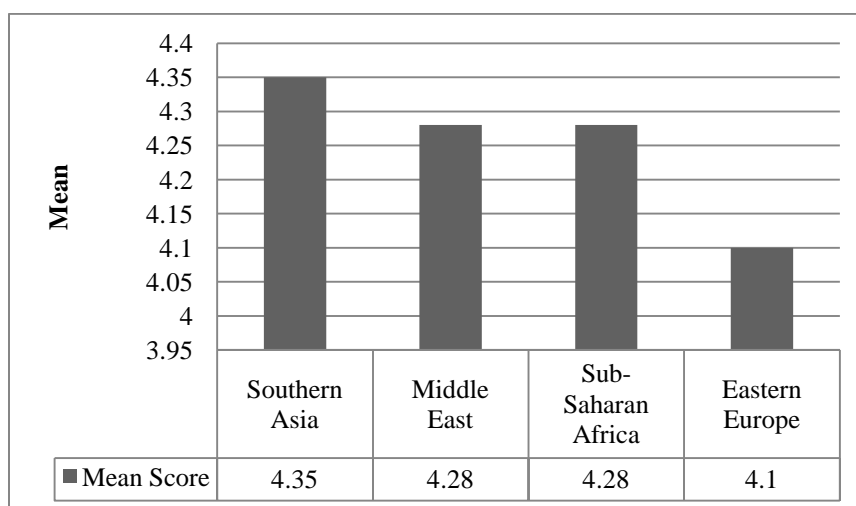
Figure 4-8 exhibits a graphical representation of the mean scores of the four clusters in this study. According to the research, House et al. and colleagues (2004)

Table 4-7

*Student/Instructor Cultural Proclivities for Individualist/Collectivist Societies*

Individualist society	Collectivist society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students expected to speak out</li> <li>• Nepotism is considered immoral</li> <li>• People expect to be treated as individuals regardless of background</li> <li>• Conflicts are salutary</li> <li>• Learning is lifelong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will not speak up</li> <li>• Students form subgroups</li> <li>• Nepotism is expected</li> <li>• Conflict is avoided</li> <li>• Students should not lose face</li> <li>• Tradition is the goal</li> <li>• Learning for young only</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from Hofstede (2001) Exhibit 5.5, p. 237.



*Figure 4-8.* Mean scores for cultural clusters of institutional collectivism. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 477-478).

defined most of the four clusters as belonging to the middle of mean scores for all institutional collectivism scores. The students had no problem speaking out, everyone was treated the same regardless of their background (with the exception of the CFO, who was shown deference), conflicts in the class were salutary, and learning appears to be lifelong in that all of the students ranged in ages from the early 20s to perhaps the 50s

with the majority being in their thirties. Therefore, none of the cultural clusters from this conference would be expected to have difficulties due to institutional collectivism.

### **In-Group Collectivism**

In-group collectivism is “The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families” (House et al., 2004, p. 30). Table 4-8 lists the cultural proclivities for in-group collectivism. When this dimension is extended to the classroom, the definition might be *the degree to which students express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their group*. Only one of the four clusters, Sub-Saharan Africa, has a middle mean score and the other three, Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Southern Asia have high mean scores (House et al., 2004, p. 193). Figure 4-9 presents graphically, the mean scores for the four clusters in this study.

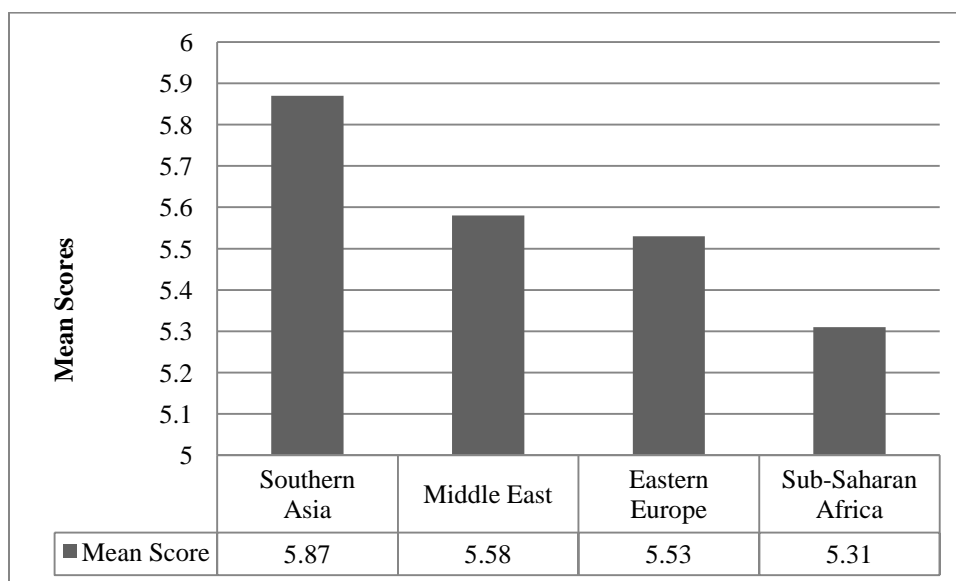
At the Cairo conference, where only one person or sometimes two come from the same country, circumstances did not allow for students to participate in preformed in-groups. For the most part, the students had never met before. However, there were

Table 4-8

#### *Student/Teacher Cultural Proclivities for In-Group Collectivism*

High in-group characteristics:	Low in-group characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students individual initiatives discouraged</li> <li>• Students have ethnocentric and traditional views.</li> <li>• Students emphasize relatedness with groups.</li> <li>• Students will not speak up in class</li> <li>• Teachers deal with students as a group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students individual initiatives encouraged</li> <li>• .Students have ‘modern’ views</li> <li>• Students emphasize rationality in behavior.</li> <li>• Students speak up in class</li> <li>• Teachers deal with students individually</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004), Table 16-1, p. 454 and Hofstede (1991) Exhibit 5.5, p. 237.



*Figure 4-9.* Mean scores for cultural clusters of in-group collectivism. Adapted from House et al. (2004, pp. 479-480).

displays of in-group collectiveness with the group as a whole in that a wall of pictures was created where photos were shared of the activities in which everyone participated. The students took breaks together and several people brought food from their country to share with everyone. Two groups of the students from Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia wore traditional clothing on some days but not every day. The fact that they all worked for AWT appeared to give them pride in their relatedness that was evident in their group discussions.

### **Cultural Proclivities**

Table 4-9 lists the different cultural clusters and how they differ in mean scores. Here they are differentiated by a low, mid and high score in order to visibly see how they measure to each other. National culture is used as a key variable in understanding the

Table 4-9

*Cultural Clusters Classified on Societal Culture Practices (As Is) Scores*

Cultural dimension	High-score clusters	Mid-score clusters	Low-score clusters
Performance orientation		Southern Asia Sub-Saharan Africa Middle East	Eastern Europe
Assertiveness	Eastern Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa Middle East Southern Asia	
Future orientation		Southern Asia Sub-Saharan Africa	Middle East Eastern Europe
Humane orientation	Southern Asia Sub-Saharan Africa	Middle East Eastern Europe	
Institutional collectivism		Southern Asia Sub-Saharan Africa Middle East Eastern Europe	
In-group collectivism	Southern Asia Middle East Eastern Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	
Gender egalitarianism	Eastern Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa Southern Asia	Middle East
Power distance		Southern Asia Eastern Europe Sub-Saharan Africa Middle East	
Uncertainty avoidance		Sub-Saharan Africa Southern Asia	Middle East Eastern Europe

*Note.* Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 193).

cultural proclivities of all of the participants. In two areas of cultural dimensions, power distance and institutional collectivism, all four clusters fall into the mid-score means. For example, students within a power distance cluster which scores in the middle of the mean scores may or may not be expected to obey their leaders without question.

With regard to gender egalitarianism, the Eastern Europe cluster and Middle East cluster are at opposite ends. This suggests that in the Middle East there is a higher incidence of male domination, assertiveness and toughness in social situations. It also

means that males are encouraged to attain a higher education than females. Already this fact skews the Middle Eastern group because they are predominantly female and highly educated. In all other cultural dimensions all four clusters are somewhat close. Sub-Saharan Africa falls into the middle of mean scores for all cultural dimensions but humane orientation and there it scores high. Southern Asia falls into the middle of mean scores for all cultural dimensions but humane orientation and in-group collectivism.

### Observations

The observations took place over a five day period in February, 2010 at the office of the American company in Cairo, Egypt. I sat in on the Voucher Exam classes and Dr. Bentley sat in on the General Ledger classes. Each day observations were recorded and coded throughout the day for strategies the instructors were using to engage students. The following Table 4-10 represents the coding key for the teaching strategies that were identified. For an example of what the observation sheet looked like, see Appendix C (Sample Observation Sheet).

Table 4-10

#### *Coding Scheme for Observations of Teaching Strategies*

Code	Teaching strategy	Code	Teaching strategy
Turquoise	Introductory story, advanced organizer	Pink	Questions to individuals
Red	Group responses	Yellow	Scenario example
Blue	Recalling prerequisite knowledge	Green	Trainers seeking feedback
Grey	Trainers adding additional details	Purple	Other

The observation section answers the research question #1: *What strategies, behaviors, or personal characteristics are used by instructors that accommodate for cultural differences?*

Table 4-11 describes the instructor characteristics used and how they were used during the course of the conference. As a particular strategy occurred, we would highlight it in the color indicated which allowed us to visually see what was going on in a class (see Appendix C for example). For instance, as the day was drawing to a close and time was running out, fewer and fewer colors would appear. This would indicate that instructors were lecturing to the students but not engaging them with any other kind of teaching strategy: No questions were being asked, no stories were being told, and no

Table 4-11

*Teaching Characteristics Exhibited During Conference*

Instructor's intentions	Instructor's actions
Shows love of subject	Enthusiasm/excitement
Makes material stimulating and interesting	Stories/scenario examples
Engages students at their level of understanding	Discussion Questions to individuals Questions to group
Has capacity to explain the material plainly	Showing patience with all students
Important material clearly understood, at what level and why	Questions to individuals Questions to group
Concern and respect for students	Showing patience with all students
A focus on key concepts, and students misunderstanding of them, rather than covering the ground	Discussion Questions to individuals Questions to group
Giving the highest quality feedback	Not afraid to admit lack of knowledge but will research for answer
Improvise and adapt to new demands	Time problems



recalling of prerequisite knowledge; just facts were being delivered. Table 4-12 describes the instructor strategies for engaging the students and how they were used during the course of the conference.

### Observations—Redji

Redji is a strong example of an instructor with compassion and patience and that used a number of strategies to engage students. On the very first day of class the set up of the room was noticeably uncomfortable in that the teacher could not move into the classroom and students could not see each other. During the first break, we called in

Table 4-12

#### *Strategies Exhibited by Instructors for Engaging Students*

Intention for students	Actions of students
Observes the material	Presentation slides on a screen Presentation slides in a notebook given to each student
Speaks about material	Discussion Questions to individuals Questions to group
Writes about material	Note taking in notebook of presentation slides
Listens about material	Introductory story Recall prerequisite knowledge Scenario example
Thinks about material	Laboratory work
Works with material	Laboratory work
Sees potential implications	Introductory story Recall prerequisite knowledge Scenario example
Sees applications	Introductory story Recall prerequisite knowledge Scenario example
Sees benefit to others	Introductory story Recall prerequisite knowledge Scenario example

janitors to move the heavy desks into a U shape (see Figure 3-1). The students that would become the most outspoken sat to the right of the instructor; the CFO and I were at the bottom of the U (furthest away) and the very quiet students took up the entire left side of the U. Because of the projector sitting in the middle of the U and the many cords that were attached, it was difficult for the instructor to move close to the students on the left side of the U.

For the most part, the students appeared to have no problem asking questions of the instructor. Often their questions were turned into a type of open discussion as hands were rarely raised and each student contributed and asked questions at will. I am reminded of the small informal classes in my graduate classes where the instructor sits at the same table with students and guides discussions. What I saw going on is not like a classroom where hierarchy, respect and awe for the instructor is demanded (as in a large power distance classroom). It never takes on that kind of formal air. In this regard, the classroom atmosphere had a power distance that was *small* and uncertainty avoidance which was *weak*.

Students take the same seats every day. The biggest group of students was made up of the Egyptians and they took seats where the instructor rarely accessed them at the left side of the U (see Figure 3-1). They were also the quietest group. When I asked Redji about this, she said they were new to their jobs, she was their boss, and more than likely they were afraid of her. She was going to talk to them after class but never had the time.

Two students from Hungary sat together, students from Africa (although not from the same countries) sat together, Egyptians sat together, but the Jordanian sat between the

women from Georgia. Almost all of the students appeared to be in their 30s.

During an interview with Redji, I asked the following.

Me: How comfortable are you with interacting with participants?

Redji: I like to interact with them. And if they are not I will ask a lot of questions. I make them; I force it in a different way, yes.

Me: How?

Redji: Music, questions, makes them stand, stretch, play like this thing I can do it with them but I don't know how to dance. That's okay, let us when she dance, belly dance.

Me: Do you belly dance?

Redji: No, no. Amr, he likes to dance and he knows how to dance. And you know in Santa Domingo they teach him how to dance their own dance and they give him a certificate.

**Call-response.** I noticed a very peculiar way that Redji has of interacting with the students. At the time, I could not name it. While thinking about it on the plane trip back to the U.S. it hit me—I had seen something like this before. The thing that comes to mind is a type of performance artistry of Black Americans called *Call-Response*. It is a communicative behavior which engages the speaker and the listeners. Barber (1987) defined it as:

The roles assigned to speakers and listeners are carefully structured by the style and functions of a given exchange. The major structural components are call-response, signifying, repetition, rhythm and rhyme, and narrative voice. Each makes a unique contribution to the expressiveness of Black communication. Each flourishes in Black speech, whether in stylized contexts (teaching, preaching, singing, praying, rapping, boasting, toasting, testifying, and storytelling) or informal conversations. They create the “stage,” “set,” and “casting” for the drama of communication among Afro-Americans. (p. 95)

Of course, there were no Black Americans in this audience and I am not sure that

anyone was even aware of this particular kind of communicative behavior, but Redji started doing it and it got such a great response that she continued to do it throughout the conference. She asked a question in a rapid and rhythmic way, using her body and eye contact with each participant, engaging the students in a very highly electrical way until everyone joined in the exchange. She called out and they responded. She clapped her hands and called out again and they responded. She continued to call out and they continued to respond. She put her whole body into this call-response communication. When everyone had responded, she smiled, tilted her head back, and then rushed forth with “WRONG” and a gasp was heard from the students as they bent forward to listen to the ensuing explanation. They were determined to get it right the next time. Sometimes Redji sat them up and they were wrong again, and sometimes she lead them to the right answer. It seemed to be a matter of rhythm.

Redji’s actions were similar to what Barber (1987) would call “signifying,” which was a form of word play. “Whether it is used to make a profound point or it is a harmless exercise in humor, signifying serves a socializing function in the Black cultural community” (p. 97). In Redji’s classroom, it also served as a socializing function, a way of energizing students as well as engaging them.

When Redji was presenting a subject, when the majority of her time in front of the students was about “telling,” she never stood in one place and she never just read from the presentation slides. Each student had a name card on the desk in front of them. When Redji was deep into a subject, she began by picking up a name card and slapping it against her hand to drive home a point. When she had finished that subject, she would sit

set the card down, move to another part of the room, and grab another name card and use it to make another driving point. Her hands and her body were part of the lecture.

**Conductor Redji.** One day I became mesmerized with Redji's body movements. She actually looked like a conductor; every wave of her hand and nod of her head had a very precise point to make. She would leave words out of her sentences and then using her arms, hands or by nodding her head, invite students to fill in the blanks. It was a kind of game and the students were easily drawn into it. She would say "again" and they would fill in the blank, and she would continue saying "again" until satisfied that everyone was participating.

Redji was the instructor, by fame, that brought belly dancing music to the learning conference in Pretoria in 2009 and then subsequent conferences that were mentioned in Chapter I. In Pretoria, when the afternoon was hot and the students began to nod off, she put a CD into a boom box and told them to get up and dance. By her account it was successful. She then took her dancing music to a conference in the Dominican Republic and the students, fully engaged, responded in kind by making a CD of Merengue music, which is popular in the Dominican Republic. This was a style of Latin American music and dance with a two-step beat. The Africans told Redji that they developed the Merengue first, and then it was taken to Latin America when the African slaves were taken to Latin America. The students from the Dominican Republic taught the CAO their dance, the Merengue, and then presented him with a certificate of accomplishment. This strategy was effective in engaging the students and creating an integrative environment.

During one of the breaks Redji, told me that she worked in accounting for 16

years before she was asked to take over Voucher. She told the story of how she could not understand at the time why she was being asked to do this. Her supervisor explained that he saw her as a leader who created strong teams and he needed that kind of team work in the Voucher department. Redji proved to be a leader, capable of creating strong teams, but she was also taken on this new duty of teaching with the same determination for success.

### **Observations—Kama**

Although an assistant to Redji in her day job, Kama illustrated what it was to be a great complimentary instructor to Redji's way of teaching. Kama was tiny and the timbre of her voice was similar to a child's, but it did not take long to realize that she was anything but child-like. She smiled a lot when she talked, cracked jokes and kept the students alert. She worked in tandem with Redji and they had worked out a system that was very effective. Kama knew how to interject opposing information without threatening Redji. Redji could be an intimidating person because of her position; whereas, Kama was easier to go to if a student had a question. Together they filled in any gaps that might have appeared in their individual teaching.

I did observe that Kama wanted to bring joy to the students by rewarding them with small gifts for correct answers, so I asked her about it.

We do, and on two occasions I have both like, you know this one dollar shop? We do have plenty of those here in Cairo. Nice stuff. They sell like earrings, CD cases, very nice, it is plastic with Barbie on it, very cute, spending like 100 pounds (\$20) and having like billions of those things. And this was very encouraging for them, every time I go with my bag.

During the interview, I asked Kama if she ever looked for information about the

kind of national culture she was going to face in the classroom.

Kama: Yes, because it is not right for you to just stick to one area and apply it to everybody, and everywhere, so wherever you are meeting those people you have to try to watch and see and notice how they will act, how they are like those people who are very cool [referring to the students in Budapest]? Or be like the English people who are very straight and will not allow you to joke.

Me: Are you becoming an expert now in culture?

Kama: Ah, we are still trying, we are still learning.

Kama was one of the teachers who traveled to other regional sites to teach the Voucher course

Me: Have you actually studied those cultures that you are going to? Studied their personalities, the way they learn?

Kama: Actually, before you go anywhere you have to go on the internet and try.

Me: You do? So you look for cultural traits?

Kama: Personal traits, or special traits, you have to find at least if you are going to go shopping, so this way you will find little notes about their culture, their personalities, where they eat, what they eat, where they go.

From this conversation, Kama felt that culture was about finding out the culinary habits and what is uniquely available to buy in the country where they were traveling.

Kama was curious and wanted to know if we knew of any other sources.

During the interview, Kama spoke about the fiasco at the Budapest conference. They could not get the students to engage or respond to anything. Kama took it personally and wanted to know what happened, and what she could do to never experience that again. Apparently, this was a classroom where national cultural differences were strongly present. Students from the Eastern Europe cluster could not be

“bribed” with chocolates or gifts and they could not find anything to laugh about—learning was serious business. This was a case where knowledge about other cultures could have alleviated the problems they encountered.

Kama appears to be very committed to her position as an instructor. But if she is asked whether she likes being thought of as an instructor she will absolutely say no—preferring to be thought of as a colleague, never allowing the students to forget that she works in the same job they do and she knows intimately the problems they do and will encounter. This attitude is a way of leveling their relative positions. By continuing to tell the students that she was “one of them,” she was reinforcing an equal relationship that might be one of the reasons the students felt free to become involved in the discussions and questions/answers sought by the instructors. A student, who was uncomfortable with equality in the classroom, may experience a diminishing of discomfort by realizing that their relationship with the person at the front of the room was actually a colleague who had to deal with the same problems they dealt with every day.

When Kama was trying to make a point and the students exhibited a lack of understanding, she asked them to think about what they had to do in order to come to the conference. “What did you have to do to get here?” She used didactic questioning as a way to structure the learning process. Here she was getting them to draw on prior learning experiences that not only aid in the retention of information, but serves as a path into a personal understanding. She was asking them what the procedure was for getting permission, and filling out forms. It was a very effective way for teaching the procedure and it was one she was able to go back to many times during the conference with great



success. Kama was also very quick to go to the flip chart and draw out an explanation if she could see that students did not understand. She had an intuitive way of reading their faces and determining if they were with her or off in a world of incomprehension. She never allowed anyone to go to that place.

The use of giving chocolate was a tool that almost the entire teaching staff used. It was what we used to train these trainers prior to the very first conference. So I do not know if they would have thought of it on their own or if they got the idea from us. But with this type of student (accountants from third world countries) it was very effective in eliciting answers to questions asked by teachers. By getting students to answer questions, there was a leveling of cultural differences for those students acculturated to never participate out loud or contradict a teacher.

### **Observations—Amr**

The ACO was an example of a master instructor. He had a natural charisma that mesmerized the audience. This was something he said during an interview.

Me: Do you ever research the cultures that you are going to be teaching, visiting?

Amr: When I was a young boy I looked at other personalities. You know, we all pass through this stage. I would look at certain people and say oh, they look funny, they look very popular, I will try to act like them and when I tried I was a big failure. So I decided a long time ago I am not going to change the way I am. I would act like who I am and if I do this it will reach the people.

Probably the most significant part of this comment is “If I do this, it will reach the people.” He was a master at reaching people. He told me about his first experience of teaching. Many years ago, he was the last speaker in the afternoon. Many will agree that

this is the worst time to be given a slot to teach. When he returned home, he received an email from someone high in the company who told him that he “knocked everyone’s socks off.” Imagine an Arabic-speaking man being told he knocked the socks off the people at a conference. He told how he searched for the words in an English dictionary—for the literal translation—to try to figure out if this was a good thing or a bad thing.

He took a boring subject, at the sleepest time of the day (after lunch and when everyone was putting their minds in “leave” mode) and “knocked their socks off.” Amr had a gift. He was a very handsome Egyptian man, small in stature but large in life. He threw out a sincere thank you at every possible juncture and was apologetic if he had to tell a truth, as a boss. During the classes, he repeatedly told the students that he was not an instructor but indeed he was their colleague. He engaged everyone in conversation and appeared to be sincerely concerned for every person with whom he came in contact. He insisted on using name cards on the desks in order to quickly get to know the new students by name. On one of the first days of the conference, he went to the back of the room and looked into the eyes of a student, using the student’s name (according to the name card), and asked him to answer a question. Everyone in the room began to giggle because the name cards were mixed up. Amr began to laugh with them and turned it into a teaching moment. It signaled to the students that a low power distance was in effect in this classroom.

Throughout the conferences, Amr would come up with an illustrative story that went over so well that he would continue the story into the next conference. Now, throughout the company, everyone talked about Amr’s pigeons and chickens, or his ghost

story, or his wife's power over his purse. These stories illustrated the creative way Amr taught. For instance, the ghost story illustrated the life of a document: It is born, it lives, and it dies (leaving a ghost behind). Or the pigeon and chicken story, where the pigeon can fly but the chicken cannot—apparently so can some documents. The intention, to assist students to remember certain procedures, helped them retain the information after they had returned to their home country. I asked him how he came up with these stories and he said he really did not know. They just seemed to come to him when students were asking questions and if they worked he kept them, if they did not he discarded them. I never heard a story from him that did not work. These stories appeared to be important tools in creating successful learning in a diverse environment. Each story was wrapped around elements that were common in almost any country or any culture and, therefore, served as a common thread that all cultures understood.

Amr also did a call-response kind of teaching, similar to Redji's. I now wonder who started it and who is mimicking who. Amr had a way of repeatedly and quickly calling out a question and expecting multiple, simultaneous answers from the students. As he cycled through this frenzied state, everyone responded. Sometimes he threw chocolate as quickly as he called out questions—which was fast. He also loved to throw out tricky questions to keep the more advanced students engaged and “on their toes.” The fact that this technique appeared in multiple classes suggested that it was an important tool to the success of these classes.

In the last hour of a particular session, when most instructors would not take the time to engage students but would stand in one place and spew out information as fast as

they could in the little time they had left, Amr would not succumb. When pressed for time, I took a count of how many times Amr asked a question. These were not rhetorical questions; he expected the students to answer them as quickly as he asked them. He asked 37 questions in 55 minutes and covered everything needed to be discussed on that subject. Amr had a very clear way of enunciating English, which probably helped his student's capability of answering and discussing. He moved into every possible space in the classroom, and never left any students out. All of the students appeared as though they had a personal relationship with him.

At the end of every session, Amr sought feedback from the instructional designers, and we would give it to him. When Amr grew tired, he would lean on the podium. After pointing that out, he never did it again. When he first started teaching in this conference, he did a thing with his glasses, twirling them as he talked; a very distracting behavior. Now his glasses were unseen during lectures. He kept them safely away from his hands, either putting them on his head or in his pocket. But the slide presentation changer became the next victim of his busy fingers. As he twirled and played with the changer, he would accidentally forward or freeze the slides, causing the need for a technician to fix the mess he created. Of course, teaching never stops when technical problems surface. He could use anything happening in the room and make it into a teaching moment.

I did notice that when Amr spoke, the students had their books open and they all were either writing what he was saying or answering his many questions. Students who were typically quiet were drawn into the conversations.

**Observations—Itet**

Itet had fewer teaching opportunities than Redji and Kama. Her teaching lacked confidence and strategies for engagement. Her conversations, as illustrated here, revealed that she would like to have had more opportunities to improve because she was not comfortable in teaching. She struggled with control over the students and thought that if students treated her more like an instructor than a colleague she would not have had so many problems. The following paints a picture of her teaching.

Itet appeared to be the senior instructor of the General Ledger courses. She stood very still in front of the room and talked with a small voice. I had a hard time understanding unless I was sitting directly in front of her. Itet never veered very far from the presentation slide screen, standing within inches of it. She also held a laser light to point to various parts on the screen. Without thinking, she moved right in front of the screen, getting closer and closer to the box she wanted the students to see, touching the screen with the laser light instead of using it from a distance as it was in all probability intended. For most of the presentation, she faced the screen and not the students. The only time she made eye contact with students was when they asked her a question. Itet's hands, when not using the laser light, were clasped together in front of her as she talked. When I first observed her teaching, a year prior to this conference, her hands would play with the glasses that hung from her neck, so she learned over the year to mindfully control her hands.

Itet asks questions but did not appear to expect answers from the students. She also seemed to be oblivious to the continual antics of Mohammad, who was making the

slide changes for her at the front of the room. For instance, when Itet began her lecture Mohammad stood up and flapped his wings like he was a bird after Amr interjected something that must have had to do with birds. Throughout the lecture Mohammad made the students laugh by using his body to make comments. He would either bob his head or throw his arms into the air, yet never disarming Itet. It was as if she did not even know he was present.

Itet deferred to Amr, who continually interjected throughout the class. When Amr talked, she stood very quietly with hands folded in front of her and looked at Amr while he talked. Students rarely asked questions during her lectures. Either they also could not hear her or they were afraid of putting her on the spot and making her even more uncomfortable than she already seemed to be. Often, during Itet's lecture, the conversations were between Amr, Tom, and one of the American software specialists while everyone else, including Itet, were silent.

During an interview, I asked Itet questions about her relationship to students as an instructor.

Me: When teaching, do you want to be treated more as a colleague or as an instructor?

Itet: When doing this thing I like to be treated like an instructor.

Me: Should an instructor be social and friendly?

Itet: There should be a limit for respect between each other. We can be friendly but at a certain point they have to feel that they are the student and I am the instructor.

Me: How do you feel about the relationship between student and instructor—straight across or up and down?

Itet: It depends on the ones you are teaching because sometimes it is good to see that we are equal because you feel that they are respecting to a certain manner. But sometimes you feel that you have to put a hierarchy. It depends on the audience.

After I interviewed Itet in the pilot study, she asked if we could help her with a problem she encountered in several of the presentations. She spoke about students who seem to have a chip on their shoulder and attempted to make her feel uncomfortable by interrupting the class with negative feedback. She felt that such interruptions made her look bad in front of the class. She speculated that it was as if some students resented having to come to the course. This was a common complaint of the women teaching the General Ledger course. All of them were very quiet speakers who did not seem to enjoy teaching. All three did not move very much, remained very controlled, and talked to the audience as opposed to discussing, communicating, and interacting with the audience. The rest of the instructors were actively involved in teaching, never stood still, and always involved the students with questions.

In their defense, the three quiet instructors had been observed in prior teaching situations where they were a little more animated and did move somewhat into the audience. This particular conference was different. The time allotted for covering material was severely cut because the CFO took over much of their class time with comments. He also corrected them in front of the students in a manner very different than they were accustomed to. Having watched these presentations many times, I came to know when one of the instructors was uncomfortable with a statement being made. Instead of correcting their fellow colleague they would offer an alternative way of thinking about it to the students. The CFO was much more direct. He would announce to

students or instructors, that he felt they were wrong. His presence appeared to create tension for these particular instructors.

Itet's style was different from the others. I believe this difference came from her inability to overcome her cultural background. The Egyptian classroom of a few decades ago required a large power distance and was very teacher centered. The teacher lectured and the students listened. There was no expectation of interaction between the teacher and the student unless it was initiated by the teacher and tightly restricted. The student could not initiate questions. Itet's teaching was indicative of a former time. Often, when there was tension, a teacher reverted back to the kind of teaching with which they were most familiar.

### **Observations –Subira**

In the first year of teaching, Subira had to use two microphones because she spoke so quietly. Now she used only one microphone. Her voice was stronger and her confidence was up but some still struggled to hear what she was saying. She stood before students who bowed their heads while writing in their notebooks, seeming disengaged. No one spoke up. Time was an issue. Subira had to convey too much material with very little time allotted to her. She did not ask questions of the students and they did not ask questions of her. Do they have a hard time hearing her also? She stood in one place, facing the students, rarely looking at the slide presentation at the front of the room. Her hands and arms moved within a very confined space in front of her, as though trying to project her quiet voice. Every day she moved about the conference rooms reserved, quiet, and well dressed. During the interview, she answered our questions as openly as possible.



The following are some of her answers that give insight into her as an instructor.

Me: How friendly and sociable should an instructor be?

Subira: Should be very friendly, yeah. It breaks the ice. It makes the learning time experience be much more acceptable.

Me: When teaching, do you want to be treated more as a colleague or as an instructor?

Subira: As a colleague, I don't feel like an instructor. I can't maybe. I don't get this feeling I know or I have this awareness actually of the people there, some of them may have even more knowledge in some areas that I feel just colleague.

At the end of the interview, and without prompting, Subira went back to the issue of being an instructor or a colleague to the students and said:

I don't know if it is right or wrong if we put ourselves as trainers or instructors and just with this environment, where people come from same positions where we are, I don't know, I can't put myself in this taboo—maybe it's not right. It feels difficult for me to do it. To put myself as superior I don't like. It is difficult for me to do this relationship. I am more comfortable to be like this on the same level.

Subira was the only instructor on the team who did not hold a masters degree. She obtained it from the University of Colorado a few years back. Could it be that the more knowledge a person gains the more they know they know and that is why she felt it was so difficult for her to take on the relationship of an instructor? Of course, as had been suggested throughout this study, the idea of presenting themselves as colleagues and not instructors had a way of creating equality in the classrooms and making the students feel free to discuss their jobs. According to House and colleagues (2004), all of the students came from countries that had mean scores in the middle for Power Distance (see Table 4-5), which probably explained why asking questions and talking during the class without being called upon commonly occurred.

Subira's educational background at the graduate level was evident in the interview and in her teaching. She told us how she had taken a subject that few understood and did a thorough investigation, using online research methods, to discover different perspectives on the subject as well as discovering the historical context from which it arose. She explained that everyone knew how to run the process but did not know why it was run that way, often causing problems. So she did research, discovered why it was run the way it was and then taught about it.

Subira was a subject matter expert who knew her subject but did not have a proclivity for being an animated teacher. I asked her if she used any particular teaching strategies to engage her students.

Actually no, this is something I don't do. Maybe I feel the students; I can't put myself into this strategy. I feel that if I know what I am going to present and I can feel their needs, as if I am in their position, I feel this is the only strategy I do. I cannot. Actually I tried to memorize an introduction and put on a smile. But I don't remember to smile. I smile in general, but I am thinking that I just can't put it on.

Subira had a very interesting understanding about teaching as a colleague. She took on this persona not because it had the possibility of culturally motivating the students to feel equal to her (and, therefore, changing the dynamics of power distance) but because she felt uncomfortable setting herself apart from them, as an instructor. She also used the word *taboo* in this situation; that she could not feel like a teacher because it felt taboo to her. The two other women who taught General Ledger with her felt the opposite. They did not like being equal with the students, but their reasoning seemed to have more to do with needing power distance to be comfortable teaching.

**Observations—Omorose**

Omorose was very conscientious about her job and always concerned about the evaluation we did of the instructors. She felt that she was not social and possibly did not like being an instructor. Her answers during the interview showed a tendency for not understanding my English. For instance, when I asked her if she felt an instructor should be considered a master, her answer became something about master's degrees and how a person with a master degree should not be teaching to this level of students. Omorose was a very beautiful woman with long silky black hair and a tall, lean physical frame. She always seemed to be on the edge and nervous about something and rarely laughed. Whenever we tried to compliment something she had done, she immediately responded with a question as to why we thought such a thing.

One of the biggest problems Omorose has with teaching was lack of time. She shared class time with Subira and Itet, and there never seemed to be enough time to finish her presentation, causing her much frustration. During this conference, the CFO, Tom, cut deeply into their allotted time. Omorose suggested that she did not use strategies to engage her students because she lacked time. She stood in one place and told what she knew, never checking to see if students understood and never engaging them.

Her answers to questions concerning her feelings about teaching showed her to be very frank and very frustrated.

Me:       How sociable and friendly should an instructor be with their participants?

Omorose: Oh no, because I am not that sociable. I am suffering from this point, but I think we have to break ice, because if they feel like we are colleagues so they will keep open the heart.

Me: What cultural adjustments, if any, did you use, during the class time?

Omorose: No, I didn't take into consideration, I just put in my mind that we were talking the same language English and so I'm teaching I'm not.....

Me: When you saw that there were some students who were very quiet and never interacted, did you try to do anything?

Omorose: No. There wasn't enough time. That sign, the end, it disturbs me. The signs like I only have 10 minutes to go. There was not enough time to interact with the students and it's not my type actually. I don't know how to bring people out. The people are quiet and I am too shy to ask them.

Me: What specific teaching strategies did you use to engage your students?

Omorose: Asking questions.

Me: Did you try to use stories, examples?

Omorose: No, I don't know, example maybe, but stories no. When there is something that I need to address, frankly talking, when we presented, let me talk about me a minute: When I present I don't feel like I own the topic from the time point of view. Yanni, when I have the time to and each time I present not lectures, Amr acts like he owns the time so he can tell stories because he owns control of the time. I feel like I have thirty minutes to present such topic and it is huge, I wanted to go to so I don't feel like I have the time.

One of the problems, as brought up by Omorose, was that the students at this conference challenged them.

Omorose: I felt it this time, I felt it very strongly, and the participants are challenging us.

Me: Yes, I heard a little bit about that.

Omorose: I am not a supervisor, Subira is not a supervisor. I feel like they are challenging the same level of employees. How come I gave them the training if I am the same level? This is my theory.

Omorose then talked about the difference between being an instructor and being a

colleague:

Omorose: Yes, and every time I just think of myself doing much effort to try to make eyes between me and the participants to feel like I am not an instructor, I am your colleague.

Me: Do you feel like that's what they took though and then they said okay you are not good enough because you are my colleague?

Omorose: Yes.

Even though using the “I am your colleague, not your instructor” strategy was used to help students feel more at ease in the classroom, this was the first time it appeared to backfire, according to some of the instructors. Itet and Omorose did not feel comfortable as a colleague. If they had to teach, they would rather have had control over the class, which was indicative of a cultural comfort—that of power distance and uncertainty avoidance. They felt comfortable with a large distance of power between student and instructor and they required a more controlled environment, where time was exact and respected, not ever changing

### **Observations—Muhammad**

Muhammad was at the front of the room in almost all of the General Ledger classes, sitting at a desk by the screen, controlling the slide presentation. Often, the instructor used Muhammad for an example because he was a fun loving man who was game for anything. For an Egyptian man, Muhammad was tall. He wore thick glasses, was somewhat bald, always in a suit or at least a shirt and tie, and spoke with a strong accent. I struggled to understand what he said, but then he threw his body into the communication and made his point. Amr asked the class a question and Muhammad's

arms reached for the ceiling then he would say something and the whole class would laugh. When he was the instructor, Muhammad asked the students continually if the message was clear and was generous with his compliments, encouraging the students to interact without fear.

Working late into the night at the beginning of the conference, Muhammad and the software specialist, Tiffany, created a skit that would help students understand a difficult concept. Tiffany turned to Muhammad and asked him a question and he would answer as though he were a student. As he explained the concept, he made eye contact with the students, never having to look at the presentation slides. His body became involved in the communication, using his arms, hands, legs, and head—whatever seems appropriate at the time. During the skit with Tiffany, when it was her turn to speak, he yielded the floor, allowing her to make her point. The whole time they were at the front of the room, students were interjecting with comments and questions without ever raising their hands, becoming very animated. During one of the points being made, a student explained that it did not work for him. In his country such and such happened. Soon several of the students were also interjecting with a similar problem. Amr stood and attempted an explanation, or Tom interjected with something, all the while, Muhammad respectfully waited and then made some joke about what was said. The students responded well to Muhammad; quickly responding to his questions, laughing at his jokes, and seeking him out after class. He used stories that were similar to Amr's, which illustrated a point with personal experiences.

Muhammad's vocal chords seemed to be directly connected to his body,

especially his arms and hands, which move up and down and all around in order to further illustrate what he is saying. Because Muhammad was a very large man, with a very large presence, students could not miss that he was speaking or become bored with what he was saying. He loved to use his wife and children when illustrating a point. I saw him as a doting and involved father and husband. He talked about his wife as though she was his new bride, and yet they had teen-aged children and had been married almost a lifetime.

In addition, if anyone needed a ride to some market place after work, he was more than happy to help out. He seemed to have a large family that was involved in many different business adventures throughout Cairo.

Ultimately, Muhammad's personality pushed through the problem he had speaking and understanding English. His was the only interview who was difficult. He did not seem to understand the questions, although he always gave an answer.

Me: How student centered do you think you should be as an instructor?

Muhammad: I don't know, the student he should tell us or tell me and I tell you about me because I can't know how to judgment for myself.

Although there was a language problem between us, Muhammad's concern for the student always came through.

Me: How independently do you feel that students should work in your class?

Muhammad: It should be work but sometimes the problem is the time, it is very tight so sometimes we won't be able to tell the people everything. So what I do I place, I explain the important thing and if you have a time after that the student would like to stay after that they can come to ask me alone or something like that. Welcome, come anytime.

Muhammad felt the same way that most of the other instructors felt. He preferred to treat the students as colleagues.

Me: When you did a presentation with Tiffany, who came up with that idea?

Muhammad: This is my idea, I ask her and answer and you ask me and answer because I don't like to make a presentation especially like blum blum blum and she talk and I talk. No you want to do something like the student to work up with us.

Me: Should an instructor be social and friendly?

Muhammad: Should be, yes. (He then laughs in a very friendly way!)

Me: As an instructor do you prefer a highly structured classroom or a less formal classroom and why?

Muhammad: Medium, because sometimes it is not like. The high is everybody is tense or something like that and not as low because we come here to discuss, to teach the people all subject matters or something like that it should not be formal also, so medium it's okay.

Me: How do you feel about a student who disagrees in class with the instructor?

Muhammad: I told you before, I am not sad or something like that because maybe I did make a mistake or not be careful about the question for example, so but it should be I go with him or her about the situation and I can explain to him or her about the situation so if I found that I am not correct should apologize and I correct myself. If I found the correct I try to explain him or her, step by step until she or he found the solutions the same like I want everybody to catch.

Me: What cultural adjustments, if any, did you use, during the class time?

Muhammad: Sometimes, Africans are not the same as Ashura, Ashura not the same as Latin America, and accent is different between this. My accent is different than American so I think of sometimes you have some habit from Egypt is not good from America so I be careful about this. It should be I careful.



From this answer, it appeared that “cultural adjustments” to Muhammad were about the accent one has. This is similar to what some educators thought was “localization”—changing the language spoken, and not understanding the nuances of culture, which included the behavioral differences of culture. Muhammad may be fixed on accent as a cultural adjustment because he was asked to return to school to improve his English. (The term “Ashura” was used in the Islamic calendar and marked the climax of the Remembrance of Muharram. It also meant the 10<sup>th</sup> in the Arabic language. I have not heard the term used this way before, as though it was the name of a geographic group).

Muhammad wanted very much for the students to be involved in the learning process. If they were paying attention he was happy. If they were not paying attention, he would do something in order to bring them back. His classrooms were student-centered. He did not need power distance and seems to never feel frustration over the lack of time.

### **Observations—CFO**

What was different from all of the other conferences was the presence of the CFO. He is a very large man and looks like a giant next to most Egyptian men. From the first day, he made it known that he was going to be part of the classes and that if he had something to say, he would say it. When compared to the instructors, he was totally different. He was very direct and made no apologies for what he did say. Every employee at the conference supported his behavior and said he had to be that way, “after all, he is the CFO.”

One day I found him sitting alone at the largest table in the cafeteria. I felt

compelled to sit with him in order to not leave him so glaringly alone. Later, in the class, he told of this experience. He was experimenting to see who would sit with him. He wanted the students to, but none dared. He also noticed that students were sitting in cultural clusters and wanted to break them up. The next day in the cafeteria, a few brave students did put their trays down next to him.

During the classes, Tom would almost always stand up when he had something to say. He would correct the instructors or correct the students. He also used great stories to illustrate a point. He asked what Dr. Bentley and I were doing, and we told him of my research project. Thereafter, he also asked for feedback after each class. In the same way that Tom was direct, so was Dr. Bentley. She told him exactly what she thought, that he needed to be more careful of how he told someone that they were wrong, similar to how the instructors corrected each other. If an observing instructor noticed that something was said wrong or needed more explanation during class, they would raise the point as a suggestion or a question. The instructors never said straight out that someone else was wrong.

Tom was the one who insisted the tables in the Voucher Exam class be moved. It made a big difference in the atmosphere of the class. We could see each other's faces and felt like we were all a part of the class. The instructors could also get right into the faces of the students. Tom also stopped the class if he felt the material was not needed or not useful to the students. During the break, I asked several students what they thought about a particular subject that Tom wanted cut out. They all responded that it was a subject that they would never use and agreed with Tom that it was wasting valuable time. Redji had

been saying the same thing since the beginning of the conferences. Tom had a lot of power over this conference. When the break was over, so was the subject in question. They moved on to something else.

Did Tom's presence have an effect on the students? The gains scores for the General Ledger course were 69%, indicating that they learned quite a bit from the course. But the Voucher Exam scores had a much lower gain score of 37%. I did not see any student afraid to become part of the discussion when Tom was present and he was present in the voucher class much more than the other class.

I asked Kama (Voucher Exam) what she felt about Tom's continual correcting in front of the students.

Kama: No, this was encouraging, really. I thought that it might be scary in the beginning but no. My comment to Amr was I was more scared of the recording.

Me: Do you think the students and other instructors are afraid of him?

Kama: No, no, no.

Me: Why?

Kama: People do understand that this is his position, CFO. He is officer. Hey, come on. He can say whatever he wants.

This is a time when authors are writing about American business leaders being "interculturally competent." Tom was the CFO over an American company that had a worldwide presence. Should he be more tactful in how he communicates across cultures or can he say whatever he wants as Kama suggested?

The point is that Kama was not rattled because of Tom's presence, nor in the way he interacted in the classroom. The most glaring impact was that Tom took valuable

teaching time and made it his own, leaving the instructors in a position they were unprepared for—no time to present. In the Voucher Exam course, a part of a subject was taken out, affording them more time to teach. However, the General Ledger course never did catch up, as reported by the female instructors.

### **Observations--Software Experts**

Another difference in this conference was the addition of two people from the U.S. who were the software designer experts. All of the procedures and ways of doing accounting for this company would eventually be put through the software. Knowing how to use the software was a vital part of the job. Other conferences did not have this element, leaving the software teaching up to the trainers. How this possibly changed the dynamics of this particular conference was in allowing the students to participate in how the software would be used in the future. The experts would explain a procedure and then ask for comments. The students were able to express their ideas about usability and usefulness, sometimes initiating a change. Recall that this kind of input by the students helps them also feel like “colleagues” in that it levels the power distance.

### **A Continual Problem**

From the inaugural conference to the most recent conference, there was an issue of two different kinds of students in the same classroom: The newcomer, who had not learned the acronyms used in this business; and the seasoned student, whose questions went deep into the core of the material. One student made it harder for the other. Either the material is too basic or not basic enough. During the breaks students would complain

to me that it was too boring, too basic, or too advanced and they couldn't keep up.

Because of time and money, this is the way it has to be for now. Does it impact the ability to learn? Apparently not to a degree that causes harm.

### **Observations -- Laboratory**

When learning software, it is important to be able to work through it and not just be told how to do it. Both of the classes, Voucher Exam and General Ledger, scheduled time in the computer laboratory for a hands-on experience. The instructors as well as the software experts participated in either lecturing or helping students. The students were given what could be called case studies and asked to work through them, alone, after a certain amount of training. After the students finished the case study individually, the instructors would work through the case study with everyone. An official assessment was not made of this experience; however, in the evaluation forms the students commented that they learned a lot from this experience. The average score was 4.5 out of a possible of 5.

The computer lab was small and very cramped. The heat from all of the computers made the room uncomfortable and hard to concentrate. This room was in the basement and had no windows, only one door, and rows of computers and desks that faced the screen where the slide presentation was projected. Next to the computer lab, a prayer room was made available to Muslim employees and prayers could often be heard through the adjoining wall. There were technical problems that affected the recording of this class. Students could hear the instructor but the microphone could not pick up the conversations between the instructors and the students. There was no space for humans to

walk and only one isle for access to a row of computers. Once seated, no one could leave their seat unless everyone moved out into the isle to let a person pass. It was next to impossible for a teacher to view the computer monitor of individual students in order to assist them. Despite the configuration of the room, students noted in the evaluation form that the experience was invaluable because of the real-world, whole-task practice.

### **Discussion of Observations**

In the office, Amr was treated like a patriarchal figure. Like a benign autocrat or an absolute ruler, Amr took care of the instructors and their families, which was indicative of the Egyptian culture. Their relationship was much more emotional and personal than one would expect. His authority as their leader was built by forming loyalty to in-group values. The employees knew his family members, where he lived, that he smoked too much, and where he smoked throughout the day.

Egyptians take great pride in belonging to certain groups. They stay together and they work together. Family businesses pass from father to son without too many exceptions. Maintenance of the in-group is paramount in any decision.

There was a high degree of in-group socialization among the instructors. One of the instructors of the Voucher Examination course had personal health issues during a pregnancy. Everyone knew her condition and that it required a trip to the U.S. for medical care. They filled in for her so her work did not suffer. They did not complain, but remained vigilant and prayerful that she and the baby would be okay. These were very compassionate people who cared deeply for each other and their personal problems. It was remarkable too that this group was a mix of Coptic Christians and Muslims.

Many times we had a chance to work with the instructors long before students appeared at the conference. The instructors took pride in belonging to their group and took much care to maintain its survival. Often, decisions made were with the group in mind. There was strong participation and communication between in-group members. We observed several “parties” or celebrations in which the entire group participated—bringing food, eating together, and enjoying one another during working hours. They share a common respect for the dietary differences of the religious groups who attended these events. We were always invited. The events we attended included celebrations for raises and job transfers, but always respectful of the dietary differences occurring because of various religious holidays.

They were careful to make us feel welcome, not only inviting us to the parties, but creating parties for us. They also, individually, offered to take us out shopping or seeing the sites. We were also invited into their homes and met family members. I believe this behavior was indicative of them creating an in-group of those involved in the conferences.

In the Egyptian society, kinship was also a significant unit. Their social identity was directly connected to kin relationships and they had a high tolerance for family; for instance, they were very tolerant of members when they could not find child care. We would often see their children at work being adoringly played with and cared for by everyone. On the streets of Cairo, and within the discussions of people working for AWT, the term uncle was used often. When I pressed hard to find out if they were actually family members, the answer was no, not genetically. They were family by

network or in-group. There was a term for this called *fictive kin* (Isben & Klobus, 1972).

During the interviews, Amr was brought up by all of the trainers and spoken of almost as a caring and loving father. They talked about their teams and how they worked hard together, even shopped together to buy gifts for their students. They wanted the students to be happy and comfortable—this spoke to their need for harmony and perhaps their strong family perspectives. After all, the students were accountants who belonged to the same AWT company (family) that they did and kinship was prime—even in extension.

### **How Is This Relevant?**

Egyptians, as part of their culture, tried very hard to make their students happy and comfortable. The interviews revealed that they were hyper-vigilant about drawing them into their in-group. They sought fun by dancing, stretching, telling jokes, and giving gifts. Almost all of the instructors demanded interaction with students. Of course, they did have problems. Throughout all of the interviews, the Budapest conference was mentioned as being very hard because some of the participants would not participate in anything. They would not answer questions, they would not dance, and they would not talk. This is very likely a cultural aversion to the way the instructors were teaching. It is possible that the students shared a cultural proclivity for an austere teaching pedagogy which they were not getting.

Another incident involved a group of Jordanians. They came to me, the researcher (not the leaders of the conference), and asked me to intercede on their behalf. They had no time at the end of the day to see Cairo because the traffic at five was so bad they did



not return to the hotel until very late. I took their problem to Chris and Amr who then took the problem to the entire class. They were given the option of leaving earlier if they would not take a lunch break. All agreed.

Various things occurred that collectively created an in-group feeling. The same pride the Egyptians felt about belonging to an in-group was woven throughout the conference, extending this pride to the new group. During the breaks, there was a lot of intermingling, a celebratory mentality, party favors, and group pictures.

### **Leadership Attributes**

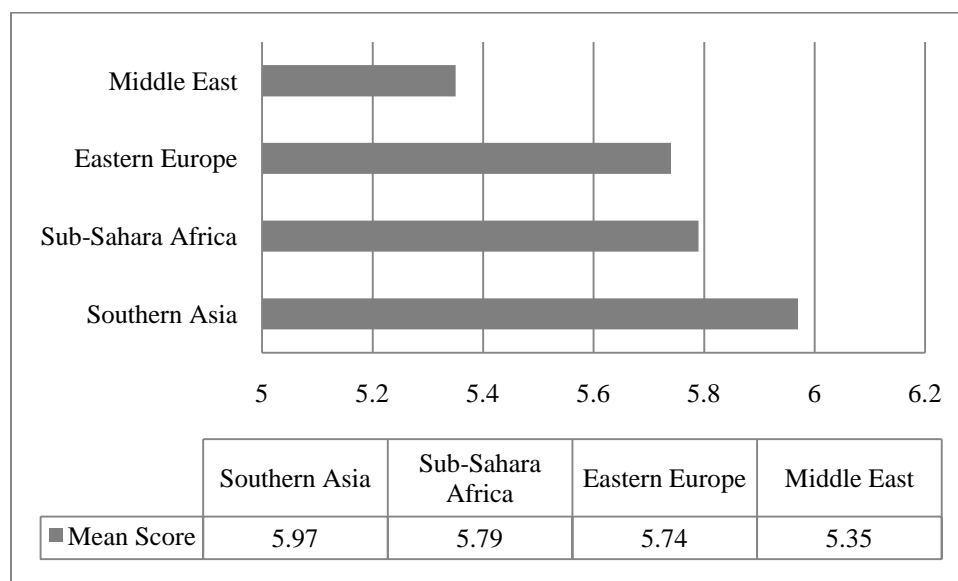
GLOBE research (House et al., 2004) looked for universal attributions of outstanding leadership. GLOBE leadership attributes are listed below, defined and integrated into this study as qualities instructors possessed which may have contributed to students learning.

#### **Charisma**

Charisma is the first of the six dimensions which is universally affective. I found it fascinating that the Middle East scored the lowest in charisma of all the clusters (see Figure 4-10). Amr was a very charismatic man and he even described a successful instructor as someone with charisma.

Of course the trainer should have a strong personality, should show control over the class without a dominating force but he or she should be respectful and well, if he or she has charisma that will be good. That can influence the people.

Several of the instructors demonstrated charismatic characteristics: Amr, Redji, Kama, and Muhammad; this characteristic probably led to the instructors feelings of success.



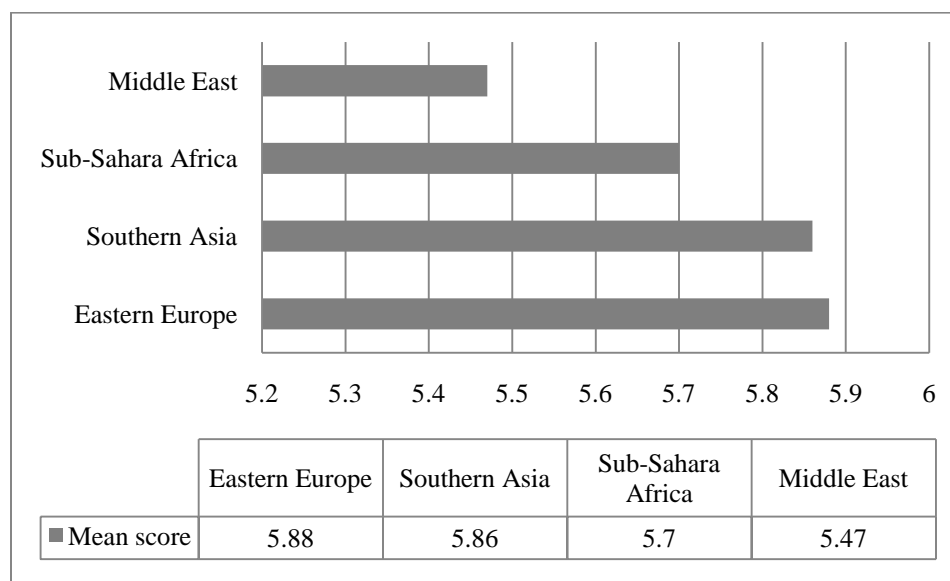
*Figure 4-10.* Mean scores for charisma leadership. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 42).

## Teams

GLOBE research identified teams as another universally perceived cultural attribute of leadership. The Middle East also scored the very lowest in this attribute (see Figure 4-11). Yet the Egyptian culture brought new meaning to teams through in-group dynamics.

Days before the Inaugural Training Conference, various male and female accountants attended the *Train the Trainer* sessions. From these sessions, the CAO was hoping to identify employees who could teach. The potential trainers came from all over the world. In the end, and throughout the rest of the year, the trainers chosen came from the Cairo office and were all women, with the exception of the leader, Amr. Dr. Bentley and I discussed this phenomenon several times.

We felt that the men performed just as well as the women did—and so we asked,



*Figure 4-11.* Mean scores for humane oriented leadership. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 43).

why were none of them chosen? Was it because the women created a much tighter and efficient team? Were there gender problems caused by religious beliefs of the Muslim that did not allow the mingling of the sexes when they traveled? As a patriarchal leader, did Amr find it easier to rein over women teams? Is this dynamic—women trainers, especially Egyptian women—the source of their success? They were all soft spoken, humble, intelligent, and motherly. Perhaps this allowed the participants to feel like colleagues and be willing to share their vulnerable (learning) side. The participants were made to feel that they were all members of a team—an effective dimension universally.

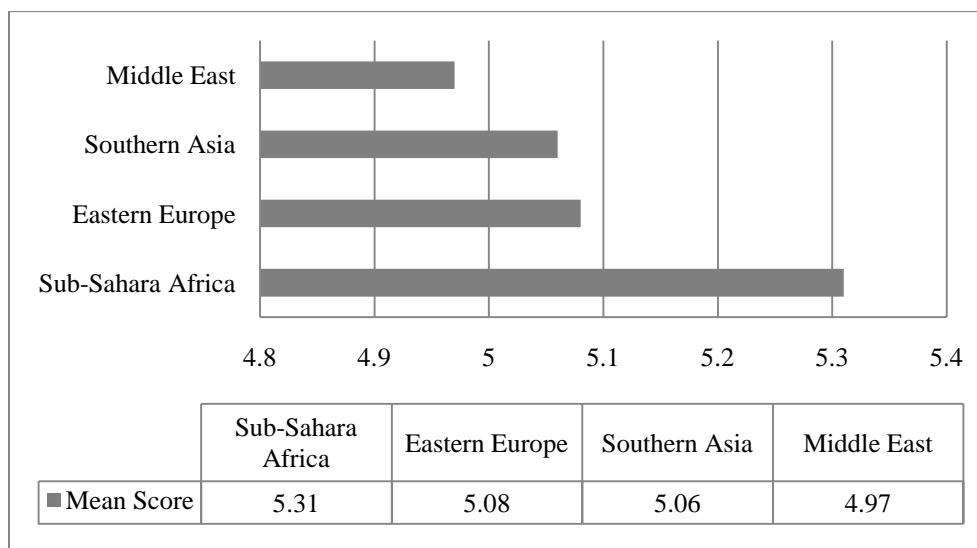
For instance, as discussed above, the students complained about the long hours they travelled on the bus to the conference. They requested changing the starting and ending times of the conference in order to avoid peak traffic hours. There was a sense that the students could have input in decisions which impacted them.

### Participative Leadership

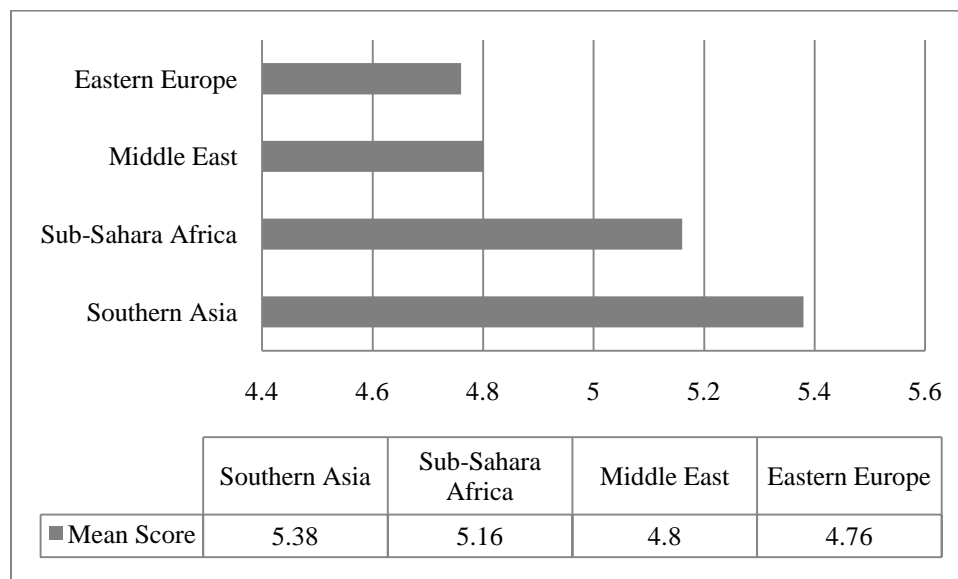
This leadership dimension reflects the involvement a manager allowed for making and implementing decisions. Figure 4-12 displays the mean scores of the four clusters involved in this study. It appears that the lowest mean score is from the Middle East, yet this does not reflect the reality of the Cairo leadership where students are encouraged to participate through discussion in the learning. All of the instructors are approachable and honored decisions made by the students.

### Humane-Oriented

Figure 4-13 shows Middle East scores in the middle of this dimension; however, I believe that Egyptians overall scored much higher than the other countries in the Middle East. They were supportive and considerate as a whole, with much compassion and generosity as evidenced in interviews as well as my observations during two conferences.



*Figure 4-12.* Mean scores for participative leadership. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 43).



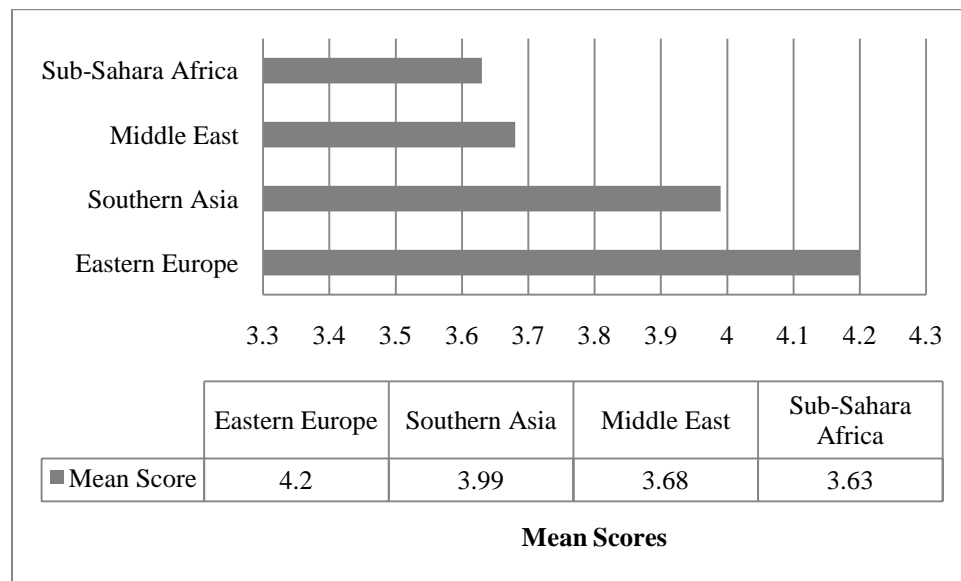
*Figure 4-13.* Mean scores for humane oriented leadership. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 45).

The only clusters that scored low, Latin Europe and Nordic Europe, were clusters of countries that did not participate in these conferences. In this dimension, the participants shared much of the same values.

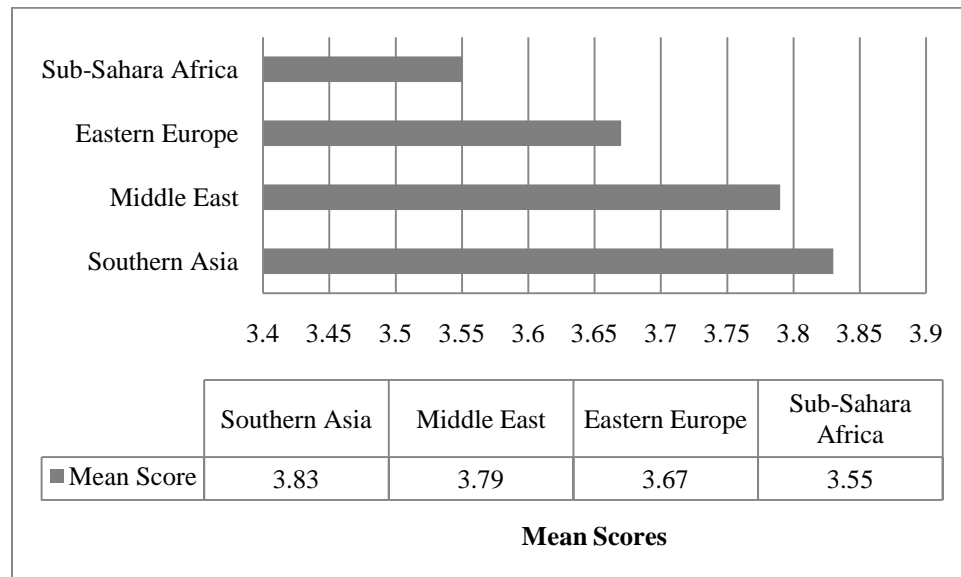
### **Autonomous and Self-Protective**

The last two and newest dimensions, were autonomous and self-protective leadership. The graph for autonomous leadership is shown in Figure 4-14 and the graph for self-protective leadership is shown in Figure 4-15. The conference with the most obvious cultural difficulties occurred with students from the Eastern European cluster.

The Middle East and this cluster were very similar, scoring highest in the self-protective dimension and high/high versus middle for the autonomous dimension. Of course, Egypt appeared to be very different from its sister Arabic nations in almost all



*Figure 4-14.* Mean scores for autonomous leadership. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 44).



*Figure 4-15.* Mean scores for self-protective leadership. Adapted from House et al. (2004, p. 45)

dimensions and so they are probably different here too, not allowing them to see their differences and accommodate for them.

### **Discussion of Leadership**

Strategies used by the instructors to encourage questions, express alternative views, and discuss AWT accounting problems led to the involvement of students in making and implementing changes. This was actually one of the universally perceived leadership dimensions in the GLOBE studies, to be able to involve participants in making and implementing decisions. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) saw repeated problems between the American trainers and the indigenous trainees, which may have reflected the lack of involvement and implementation of decisions. The Egyptians were not Americans, and they were not perceived as forcing American ways upon the indigenous student accountants. I believe Hofstede's (1980) participants experienced frustration and resistance that the instructors and students in the Cairo Conference were able to overcome perhaps because of students' involvement in the learning process as fellow colleagues.

It is not enough to be open minded and show respect for other cultures. A leader has to be aware of the different criteria people use for assessing a leader because open mindedness may not be one of those criteria. Amr was a leader with an unusual but successful attitude.

Amr and most instructors made it quite clear that they were not instructors, they were colleagues. This attitude leveled the playing field. Each of the instructors also worked in the same position the participants did—full time. They continually pointed out

that they were sharing what they knew and willing to hear from the participants regarding the accounting procedures being taught by encouraging questions, alternative views, and discussions.

### **Additional Factors**

We have discussed why the attributes of the instructors may have contributed to the success of the conferences, but what about the students? People employed as accountants, even as members of third world countries, have a high level of education, which probably contributed to their success. When problems occur in classrooms due to cultural differences, it has been mentioned that the higher the education of the student, the more able they are to navigate through cultural problems.

The participants of these conferences were all fluent in at least two languages, which more than likely also contributed to their broadened cultural aptitude. They worked for an American company and so they had invested a certain amount of their psyche to that condition, and did not fight learning. Because they were not members of a national company being taken over by an American company, there is little reason for defiance.

This was also a very different world than it was when Hall and Hofstede began to identify cultural dimensions. Cultural awareness may be somewhat heightened through exposure to the television, the internet, and the considerable movement across borders. Of course, culture is one of the hardest characteristics to change in a person. However, these conferences were not about changing culture and so resistance was not a reaction



one would expect to find. Certain situations create cultural defiance. When we feel threatened, or when our ways of knowing and being are threatened, we put up defenses and are suspicious. In that posture, it is difficult to learn. AWT worked hard to make it a safe and comfortable learning environment.

The additional factors discussed in Chapter II were ethics training, heterogeneous teams, intercultural competence, cultural intelligence (CQ), language, religion, and classroom climate. These factors gave insight into the students and how they had additional attributes that contributed to their ability to understand when people or instructors acted differently than expected.

### **Student Training Evaluations**

The student training evaluation scores demonstrated a mean score of 4.5 out of 5 possible points in both courses. The results can be viewed in Tables G-1 and G-2 in Appendix G. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006) wrote about evaluating training programs. According to the authors, this type of evaluation was a “level one,” meaning it was based on the reaction of the students to the conference and what they thought and felt about the training. It was a way of determining if a student was distracted by something during the learning experience. The student training evaluation used at the end of the two courses was standard for AWT and had been used for many years.

The following are actual, although anonymous, comments written into the evaluation questionnaire by the students.

“Many thanks for the training. It was very helpful.”

“The trainers were very professional, helpful, well organized, cooperative, very knowledgeable, patient and willing to go the extra mile in explaining and ensuring that the message was received and questions clearly answered.”

“The training cannot be better, well done.”

“The course was excellent and I commend AWT, Egypt, for making this happen. My reward is my way of saying thank you.”

“Excellent trainers, very knowledgeable in their various areas of presentation, thank you.”

There were many positive examples, but of course, there were also suggestions such as the following that spoke about the time issues of the conference.

“Give more time to the exercises.”

“Sometime the presentations go too fast.”

“The course material is thorough but hectic. In terms of critical areas, they should be highlighted, more like a tip before starting the topic with the most common mistakes/practice.”

“Time was too short to cover everything prepared. Hence reduce coverage and increase practical [experience].”

“Some trainers need to reduce a little bit the speed with which they present on materials.”

The following comments speak to the need to localize content, or letting the individual participants learn by using what they are most familiar with in order to add to their learning.

“Extend the time for specific cases to be discussed and exchange experience with the other colleagues.”

“Materials are too much for one week, cover what is necessary, need some references, some topics that we do not often use were very boring and too technical, and GL topic was hard to understand.”

In all of their comments, I did not see evidence of cultural discomfort. Time was a

predominant negative theme, both from the instructors and from the students, but not in a way that can be defined as cultural. There were additions made to the conference that were not expected such as the inclusion of the software people and the comments from the CFO that greatly impacted the time allotted for subjects.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, themes emerged from analyzing the questionnaires, observational field notes, interviews, evaluations, pretests and posttests allowing for multiple perspectives to be combined for insight into the research questions. Data were analyzed from a holistic perspective. Although the instructors were not aware of doing anything ‘different’, they were actually teaching in a manner that fit with multicultural tenets and they displayed characteristics of having a high cultural intelligence score (CQ). Recalling the research to identify variables of those who possess CQ (see Chapter I), Banning (2010) identified travel beyond cultural borders, speaking more than one language fluently and being highly educated contributed to a higher CQ. It was established that all of the participants (both instructors and students) in this study were highly educated, spoke more than one language fluently, and have travelled beyond the borders of their home country. These are attributes that enhance cultural intelligence and the ability to navigate a cultural experience more successfully. Also discussed in this chapter were the cultural proclivities of the students as measured against the mean scores for the cultural cluster dimension to which they belonged, according to House and colleagues (2004). Their behaviors did not always fit with their specific national cultural dimensions.

The emergent themes were that cultural dimensions cannot always be used to describe individuals or even small groups that belong to a geographical cluster; paying attention to specific cultures in the design of curriculum is very difficult to do if there are many cultures in one classroom and also difficult since people rarely fit into the cultural dimensions of their geographical cluster. The most important aspect of teaching to diverse cultures is that the persons teaching will experience greater success if they have high cultural intelligence scores (CQ).

The observations made of the classrooms as well as the content from the interviews were interwoven in order to paint a picture of the instructors and how they taught. Also, leadership attributes were defined and compared with instructors as a way of looking for another factor which contributed to the perceived success of the instructors. Attributes that are believed to contribute to outstanding leadership in the GLOBE countries are being honest, decisive, motivational, and dynamic (Javidan, Dorfman, Sully de Luque, & House, 2006). The instructors and the students were not flawless in their use of the English language and many struggled to understand each other; however, GLOBE leadership attributes possibly defined how the instructors, by their very behavior, characteristics, and strategies, were able to lead the many learners to learning.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this study was to answer the following question: How do culturally diverse students learn in a classroom where accommodation for those diversities is not addressed directly? Five related sub-questions were formulated to guide the researcher in answering the major question. The following are summaries of the findings discussed in light of these subquestions.

#### **Research Question One**

*What strategies, behaviors, or personal characteristics are used by instructors that accommodate for cultural differences?*

Most of the instructors used various strategies to engage the students. Discussion, questioning, storytelling, positive reinforcement (e.g., chocolate and candies), and hands-on experience were some of the strategies used and several of the instructors were uncomfortable with doing anything but lecturing. During interviews, the instructors were unaware that they did anything different in order to reach different cultures; however, the perceived success of the conference was due to the use of strategies, behaviors or personal characteristics on the part of some of the instructors. They were sensitive to the possibility of differences in students and were flexible enough to reach beyond their own national cultural proclivities to address the needs of the students.

## Research Question Two

*Do instructors experience difficulties or frustrations in teaching that could stem from national cultural differences?*

When the instructors were asked this question they unequivocally answered no, reporting that they did not experience difficulties or frustrations that could be attributed to national cultural differences. They did, however, share stories of difficulties they had during teaching. As I unraveled the stories of the difficulties, I discovered that they were indeed problems due to national cultural differences. As reported in Chapter IV, the students at the Budapest conference displayed demeanors that were generally silent and emotionless and would not engage with the instructors in conversation—ever. The students would not answer questions or become involved in the discussions or classroom activities. The students preferred seriousness to their learning; they appeared to have had no respect for instructors that treated education as though it was fun. The reactions of the students perplexed the instructors, who did not know how to respond. According to House and colleagues (2004), the Eastern Europe cluster was high in assertiveness in comparison to the Middle East, which could have played a part here. The students refused to “go with the flow” and were asserting their needs in a way that appeared aggressive to the instructors. These actions were indicative of a difference in expectations of instructor and student behaviors. However, though it was uncomfortable for them, the students did do reasonably well on the posttests, which indicated that they did learn despite the cultural differences.

Another frustration for two of the instructors was in being treated as colleagues

instead of as instructors. Previously, in the pilot study, I first learned about this attitude of instructors preferring to be treated as colleagues. When asked, each said they liked being considered a colleague. However, during the actual study, in 2010, two of the instructors admitted that they were having difficulty with this concept admitting that they preferred to *not* be considered equal with the students. They expected a certain professional distance to prevail and were uncomfortable when it did not. They felt that the students' questions were disrespectful and were meant to question their authority. These instructors spent most of their time lecturing and were not comfortable with engaging students. This is in line with their underlying cultural proclivities and is indicative of a need for greater power distance between them and their students, as well as a need for more structure as in a high uncertainty-avoidance culture.

### **Research Question Three**

*Do students appear to experience difficulties or frustrations in learning as a consequence of national cultural differences?*

There did not appear to be any difficulties with the students, and their high scores would suggest a lack of difficulty. However, we did not interview them as we did the instructors, and so we may not have uncovered underlying frustrations that simple appearances could not yield. The opportunity for the students to discuss their difficulties or frustrations was provided with the evaluation sheets. The students' identities on the evaluations were well masked, so students could have been very frank. In reading over the evaluations, I could not see any evidence of difficulties that were a consequence of

national cultural differences.

#### **Research Question Four**

*Will the students show significant improvement in learning course content from pretest to posttest?*

A comparison of the pretest and posttests for both groups revealed sufficient gain scores, enough to say without hesitation that they did learn from the course. We had no way of knowing if their learning of material translated into better work however, because we had no direct way of observing these changes or lack of changes. It was poor audits that provided the impetus for developing these training courses in the first place. After the first year of using these courses the main office voted to continue the training for another 3 years, therefore, I think we can assume that the audits showed improvement.

#### **Research Question Five**

*What additional factors contribute to success or failure of the training?*

This question is where the most potentially useful answers were found. Originally, cultural dimensions as defined by Hall (1976), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), and House et al. (2004) were used as the framework for understanding the differences between culturally diverse students. In using cultural dimensions, one realizes that fitting individuals into the geographical cultural clusters, although somewhat useful to educators in understanding culturally diverse students, they tend to be more detrimental in that they can lead to stereotyping and cultural misunderstandings almost as disconcerting as not



understanding the cultural proclivities of students in the first place. Although cultural intelligence was not formally measured, the descriptors of a high CQ were present in all of the participants and most likely led to a more efficient and successful culturally diverse classroom.

In summary, the cultural dimensions used to analyze the classrooms in this study, revealed that despite the heterogeneous composition of the classrooms, all participants learned and experienced few problems that could be attributed to cultural mismatches. Based on observations of the classrooms and interviews with the instructors, most instructors and students exhibited considerable intercultural competence and cultural sophistication. This level of competence contributed directly to their ostensible success. Without being trained in how to succeed in such a classroom, the instructors were able to use knowledge gained through their daily use of multiple languages, higher educational achievements, and firsthand experience with diverse cultural situations, to meet the required levels of performance.

### **Limitations**

This study described the distinctive way an American company used internationally based (or foreign national) employees to teach accounting principles to other employees in professional accounting positions. A number of limitations apply to this study, the first of which is the uniqueness of the students and instructors under investigation. The company managers across the world chose the attendees. Because students might feel threatened if they failed to learn at the conference, the administration

refused to allow individual student scores to be identified, thus mitigating those students concerns. The small contingent of people had specific skill sets that in many ways made them similar to each other yet distinctive to the world in general. Socialization of accountants to AWT teaching practices possibly occurred when first hired and subsequently trained.

A final limitation relates to the characteristics of the instructors and the students. They are all accountants, and have certain personality traits in common via their choice of career. The students have already attained degrees, giving them a certain sophistication regarding learning. They have all graduated from college and therefore have demonstrated an ability to learn and by extension, they have learned to adapt and succeed in previous learning situations. Had this been a less highly selected group, the results might have been different.

### **Implications of the Study**

There is a need to develop global citizens—if students and instructors alike have cultural intelligence skills they may not be subject to the myriad of misunderstandings and problems that come with the increasing number of cultural differences most people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century experience. Problems can include disenfranchisement, low commitment, absenteeism, miscommunication and lack of cohesiveness that impede effective interactions and performance. The existing literature suggests that lack of attention to cultural diversity in the curriculum and pedagogy can cause problems for the instructor and/or the student. The present study examined the effect of lack of attention to cultural

diversity curriculum and pedagogy in a heterogeneous classroom of culturally diverse students and found that the participants appeared to have characteristics needed to mitigate problems brought about by cultural diversity. Mitigating factors were being bilingual, being highly educated and well travelled. These characteristics are attributes of cultural intelligence which can lead to cultural skills that allow students and instructors to negotiate in a heterogeneous classroom.

Ohmae (2005) reminds us that economies are no longer closed within a country, nor is the world just an assembly of nation-states (a term used by Thomas Friedman). The consequence of the flattening of the world because of technological advances and the globalization of economies is that employment practices will change and employers will continue to seek people with a high degree of cultural intelligence.

### **Recommendations**

According to Creswell (2007), limitations are potential weaknesses or problems with a study. Based on the limitations that have been identified for the present study, the researcher makes the following suggestions for future studies.

1. This study should be replicated in another teaching situation but the CQ of participants should be tested first to establish if the outcome can be determined relative to their scores.

2. Further studies should be made as to how to create teaching material that will increase the cultural intelligence skills of students and instructors who are not bilingual, not world travelers and who may not have achieved a high degree of education.

3. Additional case studies using students from disciplines other than accounting should be conducted in order to expand the exploratory data derived from the current study.

4. Directions for further research would include testing for cultural intelligence of the students and instructors in order to create a competency tool for measuring the ability to embrace diversity and navigate successfully in a global world.

### **Conclusion**

This study provided a foundation for future research concerning cultural diversity in the classroom. Although cultural dimensions as discussed by Hall (1976), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), and House and colleagues (2004) have been used ubiquitously in both business and education, they are not particularly useful when attempting to identify individual learning patterns or behavioral characteristics of diverse students in a classroom. During the conference, there was some deviation from national culture in that two instructors exhibited discomfort with a low power distance found in the classrooms. They felt they needed to be treated more deferentially. They also admitted that they were uncomfortable with being questioned. Because the conference was subject to change because of circumstances created by accommodating the CFO who was present, the use of time bothered them the most and they could not flexibly change when circumstances necessitated it.

Where cultural dimensions could have helped was in the Budapest conference. If the instructors had researched some of the cultural proclivities of their students they would

have understood why the students would not engage with them. However, it was also found that cultural dimensions can lead to stereotyping and attributing cultural traits where there are none and can therefore also cause problems in a classroom.

The most striking piece of this research was the discovery of cultural intelligence as it is being used in the business world. CQ explained why the students and instructors at the Cairo conference did not have the usual cultural problems such a diverse group could have had. They were from different cultures all over the world and yet the participants did not appear to experience misunderstandings. Their pretest/posttest scores showed gain scores that were always on the high side and the evaluations made by students also did not reveal any problems.

Cultural intelligence, as detailed in Chapter II, is “a person’s capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context” (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. 9). Although their CQ was not tested, according to Banning (2010), the participants all had the characteristics of someone possessing a high cultural intelligence. Each had travelled extensively, spoke more than one language fluently, and all were highly educated.

Cultural intelligence was described by Earley, Ang, and Tan (2006) as a skill that can be developed. This construct needs to be looked at for use in education, as a way of helping all students and instructors improve their cultural adaptation in the classroom. In 1987, Professor Mitroff told the business world that it was “no longer business as usual.” The same can be said for education.

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## **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix A**

### **Bracketing Interview**

## Bracketing Interview on April 15, 2010

## Bill Fullmer Interview with Bobbe McGhie Allen

Context of this interview: This interview was conducted at Utah State University following four different visits to Egypt. The purpose is to aid the researcher in identifying issues and areas of interest where biases may exist in the primary qualitative research tool—the researcher.

F: What is your educational background?

A: I started college in Los Angeles at a Junior College because I had failed through high school and could not get into a University. At the Junior College, I excelled by getting straight “A’s” and appearing on the Dean’s list every semester, and getting involved in student politics.

F: What made that difference?

A: I was motivated for some reason. I was a non-traditional student because I was 24 and a single mother. Once I apply myself I can do quite well, but in high school I saw no reasons, since the material did not connect with my life, or so it seemed. I hated school. For instance, in a math class in high school, when I received the highest score on a test I was accused of cheating. Not wanting to ever feel like that again, I never applied myself much. I quit high school twice and took a bus to Utah, then my dad would drag me back, to compel me to finish.

F: Do you think there was a cultural influence in that part of your life?

A: I think the disrupting part for me was that I did well in grade school, really well, and then we moved. At my grade school I was a minority, as it was not an all white

school and I am white and I loved my friends who were Hispanic and African American. Then my dad moved us to an all white school. It was hard for me. You know, this was in the beginning of the 60's and there was a lot of racial tension, that's why my dad moved us. There were a lot of things going on.

F: So you are saying that you preferred the situation where you were the minority?

A: I excelled there, and I had good friends and when I went to the next school I never quite fit in. So, yes.

F: So that was the cultural diversity that you were around?

A: Yeah, I think that was the beginning of understanding the minority and people who are "other" within the dominant white culture. I mean I was just a child then but I felt things

F: So you went from being a minority amongst African Americans and Hispanic Americans into an all white school. Was that a cultural shock for you?

A: Yeah

F: What feelings came from that?

A: I don't think that I ever really fit in. Along with the things that were going on at school things were going on at home. They placed me in special classes for people who had very high IQ's and I don't know why. I just fought them (the teachers), fought everything and then they dumped me into a class of students with very low IQ's where I did even worse. They couldn't figure out what was going on with me. I couldn't either; I completely lost interest in school



F: So let's go back to your Junior College. Was there a cultural dimension to that experience?

A: Hey, I never thought about it but YES. When I started, I don't remember how it happened, there was a group of kids, I didn't know them before this, but they were all Hispanic, Black and disabled. I became a part of that group and we decided to run together as a slate in the school elections. We all won and became the leaders of the school. Isn't that funny? I didn't even think of that before. I was going back to my childhood and my first friends. Yeah, we took over the school. It was a good experience, a very good experience. We were called the US group. (United Students)

F: So, what did you accomplish for that school?

A: For me, I was President of Women on Campus and I fought for a year to get child care on campus for parents who were students going to school. And at the end of that year, the Los Angeles City Board of Education funded eight child care centers in all eight junior colleges across LA. It was an incredibly, good experience. We did a lot. You know there was a lot of tension, a lot of racial problems at the time and we just brought the campus together. I think we did an excellent job. We had a passion, and we fought. That's amazing. Thank you Bill, this hadn't even crossed my mind. It was the group, the group I grew up with, kind of, that I finally found.

F: So, along those lines, what do you think you learned the most from working with that diverse group?

A: For one thing it prepared me for my life as the parent of disabled children. I had never been around disabled people, I had been around minorities, but not that kind

and it was, you know, one fellow, he had hemophilia really bad and his twin brother was a gold medalist Olympic Champion swimmer, while David was in a wheel chair. We got David to dance. I mean he would be in his wheelchair out on the floor and we would dance with him. We brought him out. He had never been outside of his home. Back then the disabled were pretty much kept in a closet, and this was the first time he had ever been out. And we watched him grow into a very outspoken man. He couldn't use his hands, so he drew with a pencil in his mouth. He drew pictures of us. And so that was the first time I had ever been around the disabled. Plus there was another guy with cerebral palsy who could walk, but it was hard to understand him when he talked. There was a girl who was in a cart who drove around, I don't know, there was just a lot of exposure to disabled students. It was the first time I had ever been around the disabled and it was a very scary but positive experience. Then later, when I had disabled children I don't think I was as afraid because I had been through that experience in high school.

F: So you are speaking of people with disabilities as having their own culture.

A: Yes. At least back then when they were all hidden. I remember coming to campus when they had just finished putting in ramps everywhere. There was a new law passed requiring schools to become accessible. So the place was flooded with people who had never been outside before and now they were on campus. And that is why we asked David to run for office on our slate with us because we felt the disabled had to be equally represented. I think I was the only white female on that council. Also, David was white.

F: But you were a minority, sort of yourself, because you had children.

A: Yes, I did have children. I was older and had two children, I was divorced and

a single mom, struggling because there was no child care available. And that's why I took on that piece.

F: Did you have any negative experiences, taking on the system, so to speak, at that time? Any backlash?

A: No. I remember one of the things that happened was when my second son was three maybe. He wasn't in school yet, so he would attend these meetings with us and one of the professors who happened to be on the school board was a teacher in my school, and also was a professor in the department where I worked. He had a long white beard and my son, Kris, called him a Billy goat. I was trying to impress him and trying to get this thing passed and my son calls him a Billy goat. But I think him seeing me struggle with my children helped. I felt like all of the teachers were very supportive of me, extremely supportive of me. On the negative side, I can't think of anything. It was such a positive time for me to get A's, to get to be able to do something politically, be with people I felt most comfortable with. It was a good two years.

F: So from there, that was your Junior College, what was the next step in your education?

A: I wanted to go to UCLA, but I was too poor, and they didn't have a scholarship for me so I took a job at Bank of America in the Data Processing Center. I excelled there. That was the bank where—oh yeah, this is another thing about culture. I was hired to be the manager of the very first Automated Payment Center. I was young and female and they were trying to fill a slot in a higher position but they hired me because they thought I would fail. The only people they would let me interview to hire, I mean they did let me

do the hiring, but the people came from a pool of people they chose, these people were all from foreign countries or blacks and Hispanics from the U.S. They were from Cuba, Thailand, Philippines, and China, people that they did not respect or value. The whole thing was about failure, you know, setting me up as an example of female leadership that would ultimately fail. So I picked who I liked, the only other white person was Sharon Tate; she was a single mom who was deaf. Everyone else was from the Black communities, the Hispanics, and foreigners. And we excelled. We kicked butt. Oh my God. We had that center up and running faster than anyone else could have done. We actually came together as a team. Everyone had a reason to make this work, everyone. They were all highly motivated. That's another thing of working with other cultures.

F: So what about cultural diversity attracts you?

A: I don't know, maybe because I feel their pain. I have felt marginalized in my life and am frequently motivated to fight for the underdog. I do have successes. When I get empowered I can do great things. It's when I feel, like, when I first went to that grade school, or even in junior high or high school there was nothing to fight for, I was just a nobody, I don't know.

F: You just blended right in or you became overlooked?

A: When I work with minorities at least I feel alive and feel passion.

F: Thinking about that your feelings or identification with a minority group, would you categorize them as a sympathetic or an empathetic feeling?

A: I hope it's not sympathetic; I hope it is empathetic.

F: Why would you prefer the feeling to be empathetic?

A: I don't want to feel sorry for people, I want to empower people. I feel their pain and I want to empower them. I think that's a piece of where I grew up in the 60's. I was the hippy, and I came to fight every social value that my world told me I had to believe in.

F: Did you ever feel like you were taking a risk?

A: Yes, always.

F: Really? Tell me about that.

A: Risk. This whole trip started when I, going back to school started with me buying a one-way ticket to London, England with no money in my pocket. I had always wanted to see architecture and the history of Europe and it happened on that trip. You know, I was hitch-hiking around the world and I met people on the road that changed my life. I ended up at a place called L'Abri, which was an intellectual community in England. It was being around those people. Oh, but getting back to the risk, I was always willing to take a risk, and that was a risk, to leave the U.S., alone, a young woman, with no money, and hope for the best. I have been labeled danger-seeking.

F: So, are you lacking fear or aren't you afraid of the dangers?

A: I think what has happened to me now, as I get older, is that I have more fear because I'm more aware of ways people can fail and I have more at stake. But you know, working for a PhD at my age is very stressful, yet I am willing to take the risk that this will work for me.

F: Thank goodness. So, understanding a bit of your background, realizing where you have come from, let's talk about your project and where you see it going. So what

are you trying to accomplish now?

A: Like most PhD's you just don't know what your study is going to be. I had worked with David Wiley and thought my research would be about Open Source software. Then he left for BYU. When I saw the e-mail from Joanne about Egypt I jumped at the chance. Egypt has always called out to me. So I was like, YES, please take me, I will do anything. Particularly the art there, the pyramids, the history, I didn't know anything about Egyptians. So, I took that chance and took the job. Okay, what was the question again?

F: So, you just had an initial desire to go to Egypt? So from that, how did you decide on your project? What is your dissertation about and what are you trying to accomplish there?

A: I didn't know just exactly how or what I would study, other than when it first started and I tried to get demographics from the funding agency about in Egypt, I kept trying to ask them about the students and they wouldn't give me any information and said it was not important. And I said, but it is important, because I knew they were coming from third world countries, all of them. I knew that they all spoke different languages. But I was very concerned that the funders were not concerned that you had to do something different to help all of those people learn. So of course, I went into this thinking that they were going to fail. So I designed the manuals to have absolutely everything I could think of to have in them for different learners. That was the only thing I had control over. We didn't know anything about the students so we packed it full, like 800 pages. And when the trainers didn't like the presentation slides, that was devastating.

I knew that their initial response was that you don't have to do anything about culture, it doesn't mean anything, and my response was oh my God, yes, it does, it does mean something. And I think it was proven when we did the Presentation slides and made like a 1,000 for each course, took them over there, to Egypt, and they hated them, of course, because their culture likes bright colors and moving objects and our slides reflected the American culture and how we do things. So right there, there was a clash of cultures. I wasn't wrong, culture does play a part. But, we didn't hear from them again for nine months. So I thought the project was over. I started looking for other dissertation topics. Then Joanne told me that they had called and they wanted us back. YES, but this time I determined it was going to make it about my dissertation. So that's why we went in October. Before we were suppose to go in December. I was not going to work on it if I couldn't get a dissertation out of it. And the underlying agenda of my dissertation was to prove that they had to pay attention to culture. However, during that October trip, I found that the gain scores were incredible. They went around the world with the learning materials, did nothing for culture and succeeded. And so that became the question for my dissertation. How did they do it? It goes against all of the intercultural research I know about. So I found how they did it and it does break down my prior beliefs.

F: So, seeing those big differences that challenged your assumptions made you dig deeper? So all these trainers found another way to bridge the cultural gap?

A: Yeah.

F: So you were right that there was going to be a gap, but how they filled it was just different than you expected?

A: Yes, they didn't do it exactly like Hofstede did it.

F: Are there parts of the Egyptian culture that you identify with and think made it easier for you to go over there so many times?

A: Yes, I fell in love with Egypt the first time I was there. I don't know what reason.

F: Oh, you don't know why?

A: I grew up in LA and hated it. I hated the massive number of people, the long lines and the traffic. So look at the traffic in Cairo; it's an adrenaline rush just to get into a car, so I don't know why other than it takes me back. It's familiar to where I grew up. I had that same feeling because of California, the same plants, same type of climate and just a sense of sameness from when I grew up. I feel that. I felt like for years I had been asleep and when I went to Egypt, it was like I woke up. Egypt makes me feel energetic, alive, and of course, it does help to be a blonde in a dark haired culture because you stand out. I get attention that I don't get here. I don't know, there are many, many things.

F: Is there anything specific in that culture? I mean it is very different than the one we live in isn't it? It's kind of a patriarchal, Muslim, ethnocentric society, so isn't that a dangerous place for you to go to?

A: Especially me. I have been called a "feminazi" for many, many years and I am a feminist. I fight for women's rights, and that part I don't understand. I don't know if there is a deep down hope that I can help the country change that aspect of their culture. I don't know. It does scare me because it's not me. But on the other hand I love the fact that it is a country that has a high regard for family. It has almost the same cultural tenets



of my own culture only magnified. Growing up a Mormon, I feel like the Muslim community is very similar, and I respect that. It is countrywide, not just a sliver of a country like in the US.

F: How do you feel religion plays a role in the cultural connection you feel?

A: I think it is strongly there; however, as you know, I prefer to stay neutral when it comes to religion. I did marry in the temple and I did do those Mormon cultural things; but for years I have not participated in the rituals of my culture.

F: Does that create a barrier between you and other cultures?

A: I think it opens me up. I have a lot of tolerance for other cultures and other peoples' beliefs. Arguments about the uniqueness of one culture don't sway me. I just know that people believe deeply and I respect that but I do not possess that same gift.

F: So in your dissertation—what are the ways you find yourself identifying with Egyptians?

A: Love of family, and for another, I think I have empathy for the women. For instance, I have heard of countries who won't allow women to wear a hijab. I don't agree with that because I believe everyone has a right to display their religiosity. I think I understand it because Mormon's wear temple garments. I feel like I understand the men because I was raised in a patriarchal society, even though I fought against it. I can see through it now, more than while I was fighting against it. Now that I can see through it, it does not threaten me anymore. I feel free to be myself. And that is where I may get in trouble with Egypt. I do know how to conform, but I also know how not to conform. Where I could get in trouble is with Egyptians who are superstitious. I have a necklace

that has a saying on it from the Quran. I was told that I had to take it off every time I went to the bathroom. That is something I don't believe. So I told this to another Egyptian friend who told me the story of an Imam, a Muslim spiritual leader, who was told of this superstition. The Imam asked:

“Do you read the Quran?”

“Yes,” replied the man.

“Have you memorized parts of the Quran?”

“Yes.”

“Then by your reasoning, take your brain out of your body before going to the bathroom.”

The people in Egypt are not all superstitious, of course.

F: So your love of other cultures has been a lifelong endeavor and it comes from several different places: A love of other people and a desire to improve their lives and to make sure they are being treated fairly.

A: Yes, that is probably an underlying goal of mine that haven't surfaced until now

F: I am curious to know if you have had a chance to identify with any of the other cultures in this project.

A: The Hungarian women I had a hard time communicating with. But I loved the Russians and one of the women from Thailand and I had a particularly wonderful bonding experience. I think this might go back to when I managed the Automated Payment Center and my employees were from many of these same countries. The

majority of people there were from Sub-Saharan Africa and I did identify with them, but they are very similar to me, according to their value structures as reported in the survey. This is kind of funny because I have a Hungarian daughter-in-law and a Bolivian daughter-in-law.

F: So, your children have taken on cultural acceptance of other people.

A: Yes, they probably have.

F: Well, I mean, if they are married to people of other cultures they would have to be tolerant and accepting. So, what are the cultures you have surrounded yourself with?

A: Well, in the last thirty years I have been in rural Utah. My neighbors are all blonde and blue eyed. I remember craving diversity. When I came up to Logan on campus it was great excitement for me. And, I guess that is another interesting thing. Most of my closest friends here are all from other countries. I am part of the international community on campus. My roommates are from India and Lithuania. I think that's why I am much happier here than in Salina. We have talked about it, why am I fitting in with this group? For one of them I am his grandmother, the rest I am old enough to be their mothers, but they don't treat me like an old person. I am treated as one of the group. I just feel more comfortable with them.

F: So you are not letting any of the usual conventions be barriers?

A: The usual convention being what?

F: Age, gender and religion; I mean there are a million people with your same description, your same age, your same background that are not connecting with any of the students here, hanging out with them and being their friend.

A: Okay, so what happened? What's wrong with me? Why is this?

F: Well, let's not say it's wrong; it's just the choice that you made.

A: And they made.

F: Yeah, but if you behave like their grandmother, you would get treated like their grandmother.

A: My roommate Magathi told me that in her culture in India, she says it is so weird here in the U.S. because her best friend and her would go to the movies and invite her grandma or her aunt along. They always include family members, no matter how old they are. So for her, my hanging around with someone older is not unusual or strange. And that could be part of the reason. Other cultures respect the aged ones and include them, whereas in the U.S. they are frequently set apart. And, I am at an age where there is no one here my age to socialize with. Everyone has got families, work and school.

F: But you are not scared of your friends being from different cultures?

A: No, no, in fact I love it. I love every part of it.

F: There have to be some things that you can't agree with. You can't agree with everything. How do you deal with stuff that would be fundamentally different from you?

A: Like?

F: For instance in Egypt, the studies where women are still being circumcised. That has got to be pretty anti-feminist.

A: Oh, it is, but I think that happens in the very rural areas of Egypt where superstition reigns. And my response would not to be afraid of them but to try to help them, to educate them so they can leave some of those cultural things behind. Hofstede

believes that you cannot change cultural conditioning and that it is not malleable. I believe it is; I believe education is one of the things that can change culture.

F: So really, your study is you marrying up that idea, you believe culture is important but it can be improved through education.

A: Yeah, I do see that. Hofstede is wrong now. But back at the time of his study, culture was much more stable, and we stayed more within our clusters. And for me, in the sixties, that is when I broke through my acculturated values. Even though I say I love Egypt because it is like the place where I grew up, I am doing it with much more freedom than I would have if I had never broken through. I have written about that in my dissertation. Not everyone can break through and see their cultural proclivities; it takes breaking through your own culture and seeing past it to understand other cultures. And I saw that with these teachers. They came from a very patriarchal society. It is in their behavior, but you also see an incredible change to allow them to teach these students who come from anywhere, even the students from Budapest.

## **Appendix B**

### **Institutional Review Board Approval**



USU Assurance: FWA#00003308

Protocol # 2578

SPO #:  
AES #: UTA00

2/16/2010

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Joanne Bentley  
Bobbie AllenFROM: Kim Corbin-Lewis, IRB Chair *Kim Corbin-Lewis*  
True M. Fox, IRB Administrator *True M. Fox*

SUBJECT: Teaching Across Borders: Business as Usual?

Your proposal has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board and is approved under exemptions #1 & #2.

- ☒ There is no more than minimal risk to the subjects.  
There is greater than minimal risk to the subjects.

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file. **Any change in the methods/objectives of the research affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.** Injuries or any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the IRB Office (797-1821).

The research activities listed below are exempt based on the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations for the protection of human research subjects, 45 CFR Part 46, as amended to include provisions of the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, June 18, 1991.

1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
2. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through the identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b) any disclosure of human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

## **Appendix C**

### **Sample Observation Sheet**



## Sample Observation Sheet

**G/A Workshop**

Thursday Observations 02/25/2010

**Presenters: Amr**

8.30 am **Source Funding** (Late start due to bad traffic caused by rain and delays in pickup/drop-off of participants.)

- Mostly direct instruction: description of the basic differences in source of funds. Theoretical overview. Participants have a hard time waking up and getting going this morning. Amr uses candy with individual questions to try to wake them up. Several comments from Tom clarifying points.

9.00 am

- More direct instruction. Some individual questions “Why do we do X? You deserve a candy!” “What happens when XX? Yes, you are ahead of me!”

9.30 am **Financial Data Collection**

- Woman from Egypt office asked by Amr to come in as an expert/efficient accountant and financial analysis and talk about how she gets her data. “Any questions? Are you with me?” General group questions. Software Expert offers explanation about why the web tool went away. Specific questions: “What is an example of XX? What else? Anything else? I am holding this candy for the one key point. What do you think it is? Yes, this is it”
- Payroll related example of severance. Remember how yesterday when we talked about the difference between severance and separation?

10.00 am **Morning Break**

**Trainer Evaluation Feedback to Amr****G/A & V/E Combined Sessions**

Thursday Observations 02/25/2010

**Presenter: Amr**

10.25 am **MTB (Manage-the-Budget)**

- Current issues of MTB created lots of discussion and questions for Tom. Student from Taiwan said she had not been able to make a change in GLAAS. Software Expert said as reference field it can be changed but creates an inconsistency which has to be resolved. Lively discussion of common errors and miscoding. Group response, “Do you agree?”

## **Appendix D**

### **Protocol Interview**

## Protocol Interview

Table D-1

*Survey Questions for Trainers*

Survey question	Survey Question
1. Where you born and raised in Egypt?	2. When teaching, do you want to be treated more as a colleague or as an instructor?
3. How many languages do you speak? What are they?	4. How do you handle students who ask questions during your lecture?
5. What educational degree or certificates do you have?	6. How do you handle it when a student disagrees with you?
7. What grade are you at AWT?	8. How independently do you feel that students should work in your class?
9. Do you think students should take initiative in their training?	10. What is your reaction to a student who is very dependent upon you?
11. How student centered do you think you should be as an instructor?	12. How do feel about instructors who act like experts?
13. Do you believe that family members or friends should be hired before strangers?	14. Should your background and training make a difference in how people treat you?
15. How do you handle disagreements between people of different cultures when you're teaching?	16. How do you feel when a student suggests that the instructor must be brilliant?
17. How do you response when you find a weak student in your class?	18. Should an instructor be social and friendly?
19. As an instructor do you prefer a highly structured classroom or a less formal classroom? Why?	20. How do you feel about a student who disagrees in class with the instructor?
21. What cultural adjustments, if any, did you use, during the class time?	22. How do you feel when you have to tell the student you don't know the answer?
23. What did you do to prepare for this training?	24. What specific strategies did you use to engage your students

## **Appendix E**

### **Demographics of Students**

Survey of Students

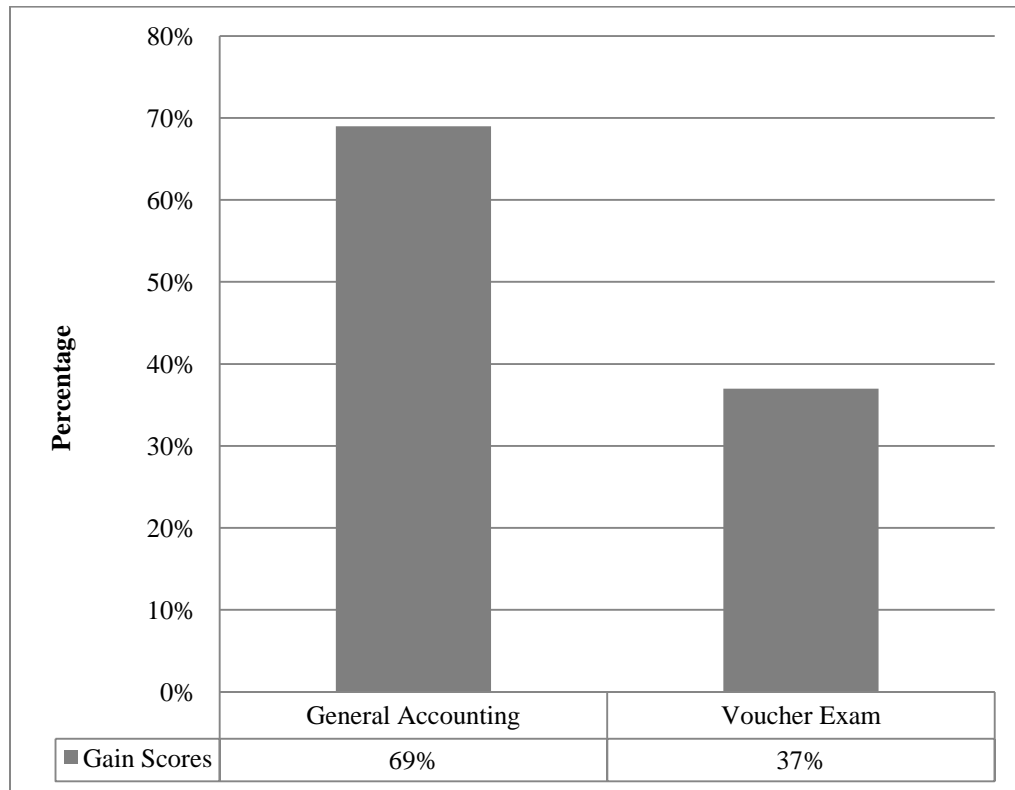
Table E-1

*Demographic Questions for Students*

1. What country are you from?	
2. What languages do you speak?	
3. What is your educational Level?	

## **Appendix F**

### **Gain Scores**



*Figure F-1.* Gain scores for general ledger and voucher exam courses.

**Appendix G**

**Student Evaluations**



Table G-1

*Student Evaluations for General Ledger*

RATINGS		1	2	3	4	5	Average Rating
		Not helpful				Most helpful	
1	Objectives were met			3	3	12	4.5
2	Manuals			1	6	11	4.6
3	Presentation			2	7	9	4.4
4	Lecture			1	9	7	4.4
5	Discussions			1	9	8	4.4
6	Exercises/Quiz			1	10	7	4.3
7	Trainers were well organized			3	4	11	4.4
8	Trainers presented materials clearly			3	7	9	4.6
9	Trainers knowledgeable enough about the material			2	5	11	4.5
10	Trainers answered questions sufficiently			1	5	12	4.6
11	Skills learned in relation to improving current job			3	5	10	4.4
Total Points and Overall Average		0	0	21	70	107	4.5

Table G-2

*Student Evaluations for Voucher Exam*

No.		1	2	3	4	5	Average rating
		Not helpful				Most helpful	
1	Objectives were met		0	0	9	8	4.5
2	Manuals:			3	5	9	4.4
3	Presentations			2	6	9	4.4
4	Lecture			2	11	4	4.1
5	Discussions			1	6	10	4.5
6	Exercises/Quiz			0	6	11	4.6
7	Trainers were well organized			1	11	5	4.2
8	Trainers presented materials clearly				12	5	4.3
9	Trainers knowledgeable enough about the material				3	14	4.8
10	Trainers answered questions sufficiently				3	14	4.8
11	Skills learned in relation to improving current job			1	7	9	4.5
Total Points and Overall Average		0	0	10	79	98	4.5

## VITA

BOBBE McGHIE ALLEN

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### EDUCATION

**Ph.D.**, Instructional Technology & Learning Sciences, 2011  
 Utah State University, Logan, UT, USA  
 Dissertation title: Teaching across Borders: Business as Usual?  
 Advisor: Dr. Joanne Bentley

**M.Ed.**, Instructional Technology, 2006  
 Utah State University, Logan, UT, USA  
 Thesis title: Blogs, Wikis and New Media  
 Advisor: Dr. David Wiley

**B.S.**, Honors, Psychology, 2000  
 Utah State University, Logan, UT, USA

Los Angeles Valley College – Van Nuys, California

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research (Evaluation) of Utah Library Systems	Present
Research, Team Leader/USAID & USU /Cairo, Egypt	2008-2010
Research Assistant, Utah State University	2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leary, H., Fitt, M.H. &amp; Wiley, D. (2009) Changing higher education learning with Web2.0 and open education citation, annotation, and thematic coding appendices. Did part of the research for this project. Online at <a href="http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/itls_research/7">http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/itls_research/7</a></li> </ul>	
Internship, American Academy, Salt Lake City, Utah	2008
Graduate Research Assistant, Dr. David Wiley, Utah State University	2005-2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web 2.0</li> <li>• Social Networking Tools</li> <li>• Website author for open source tools for teachers</li> </ul>	
Evaluation of Navajo Nation NCLB Program, Dr. Nick Eastmond	2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher and Technical Writer</li> </ul>	
Utah State University – Government of the Dominican Republic	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher</li> </ul>	

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

Cultural diversity in the classroom

Distance Learning/Online Teaching  
 New Tools for Teaching/Social Media  
 Human Performance Technology  
 Evaluation  
 Open Source

## PUBLICATIONS

### Technical Reports

- Bentley, J.P.H., **Allen, B.** (2010). *Final Evaluation - USAID Training Session: General Accounting and Voucher Examiner Training*. Prepared for USAID in Cairo, Egypt.
- Bentley, J.P.H., **Allen, B.**, Bair, R. Bentley, P., Berrett, B., Berrett, J., Gricius, R., Hinckle, J., Rajigah, L., Villareal, B. (2008). *Final Evaluation - USAID Training Session: General Accounting and Voucher Examiner Training*. Prepared for USAID in Cairo, Egypt.
- Eastmond, J.N., **Allen, B.**, Bloxham, K., Drysdale, M., Gerard, M.C., Hall, K., Zang, B. (2008). *Impact of reading first in teacher preparation for Native American schools*. Prepared for Envision Research and Evaluation, LLC.
- Subramony, D. P., Polanco, R. E. V., Shakespear, L., Atilas, L. B., **Allen, B.**, Asencio, T. de la R., & Melenciano, Y. (2006). *Educational Technology in the Dominican Republic/La Tecnología Educativa en La República Dominicana*. Prepared for the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (SEESCyT), Government of the Dominican Republic.

## PROCEEDINGS PAPERS

- **Allen, B.** & Bentley, J.P. (2010). *Can you hear me now? Cultural Intelligence explored in new ways in a connecting world*. October 22-28, 2010. 'Hot Topics' for AECT conference, Anaheim, California.
- **Allen, B.** (2007). *Genders and journals*. AACE Conference, Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education.
- Subramony, D. P., Polanco, R. E. V., Shakespear, L., Atilas, L. B., **Allen, B.**, Asencio, T. de la R., & Melenciano, Y. (2006). *Developing sustainable capacity in instructional technology in public institutions of higher education in the Dominican Republic*. Technology and Teacher Education Annual, 2051-2055.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

### Peer-Reviewed

- **Allen, B.** & Bentley, J.P. (2010). *Can you hear me now? Cultural Intelligence explored in new ways in a connecting world*. October 22-28, 2010. 'Hot Topics' for AECT conference, Anaheim, California.

- **Allen, B.** (2010). *Teaching across borders: Business as usual?* Inter-Mountain Research Symposium, March 31, 2010, Logan, Utah.
- **Allen, B.** and Bentley, J.P. (2010). *Creating Learning Materials for Seventy Third World Countries*. 6<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on Technology for Innovation and Education in Developing Countries. January 21 - 23, 2010, Maputo, Mozambique.
- **Allen, B.** (2007). *Genders and journals*. AACE Conference, Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education. Quebec City, Quebec. October, 2007.
- **Allen, B.**, Sharif, A., Scoresby, J., and Shelton, B. (2007). *Refining techniques for tying learning objectives to game based learning activities*. TTX Conference, Teaching with Technology Idea Exchange. Orem, Utah. June, 2007.
- **Allen, B.** (2007). *Women and writing*. Paper submitted for AECT conference for October 2007.
- Subramony, D.P., Polanco, R.E.V., Shakespear, L., Atilas, L.B., Asencio, T. de la R., **Allen, B.**, & Melenciano, Y. (2006). *Developing sustainable capacity in instructional technology in public institutions of higher education in the Dominican Republic – An update*. Paper presented at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology's 2006 International Convention in Dallas, October 2006.
- Subramony, D.P., Polanco, R.E.V., Shakespear, L., Atilas, L.B., Asencio, T. de la R., **Allen, B.**, & Melenciano, Y. (2006). *Developing sustainable capacity in instructional technology in public institutions of higher education in the Dominican Republic – An update*. Paper presented at the Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education's 2006 International conference in Orlando, March 2006.
- **Allen, B.**, Bradley, J.C. (2006). *Lessons Learned-Podcasting a Three Day Conference*., Philadelphia Area Technological Conference, Pennsylvania. February 2006
- **Allen, B.** (2006). *Bliking in a Third World Country*. Philadelphia Area Technological conference, Pennsylvania. February 2006
- Duncan, S.M., Stowell, T., **Allen, B.**, Shelton, B. (2006). *Design of a Multi-User Game for Learning Science Students*, Philadelphia Area Technological Conference. February, 2006,
- **Allen, B.** (2006). *Lessons learned-Podcasting a three day conference*. Utah Coalition for Educational Technology Annual Conference, Murray, Utah. March, 2006

#### PRESENTATIONS

- **Allen, B.** (2010). *Teaching across Borders: Business as Usual?* Graduate Research Symposium, USU. April, 2010.
- **Allen, B.** (2009). *Camtasia for Teachers*. Presented at USAID, Cairo, Egypt.

- **Allen, B. (2009).** *Thoughts on Transitioning*. Presented at South Main Medical Clinic for parents of disabled children, Salt Lake City, Utah, January, 2009
- **Allen, B. (2006).** *Bliki-ing in a third world country*. Graduate Research Symposium, USU. April 5, 2006
- **Allen, B. (2008).** *Free software for starving students*. Reentry Student Workshop, USU, January, 2008.
- **Allen, B. (2008).** *Free software for starving students*. Reentry Student Workshop, USU, September, 2008.
- **Allen, B. (2008).** *Open source software and the student*. Brigham City, USU, February, 2008.

### INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Member of International Students on Campus 2006 to present
- Member of Middle Eastern Club 2009-2010
- Team Leader over MBA and Masters USU students in Egypt 2008
- Team Leader over MBA and Masters USU students in Egypt 2009
- Research of Universities in Dominican Republic 2005
- Have traveled through 22 countries – South America, Central America, Canada, Europe, and Egypt
- Built a brick factory in Guatemala 1976
- Attended school in Greatham, England 1972
- Attended school in Huemoz, Suisse 1972

### PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Vice President, Instructional Technology Student Association 2006, 2007
- Secretary, Instructional Technology Student Association 2005, 2006
- Distance Learning K-12 Endorsement, USU 2006
- AECT 2006 - Present
- Adjudicator, Utah Performing Arts 1996 and 1997
- Secretary/Treasurer, Utah Performers, Utah Arts Council 1995 to 1997
- Los Angeles County Commissioner – Hermosa Beach 1978 to 1979
- Million Dollar Club – Los Angeles Realtors 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979
- President of Women – Los Angeles Valley College 1973 to 1974
- Golden Key Honor Society

### COMPUTER SKILLS

- Computer game building (IF – Interactive Fiction Software) Microsoft Suite, SPSS, Web 2.0 Tools, Dreamweaver, XHTML, CSS, HTML, Adobe PhotoShop, JavaScript, Camtasia, Audacity, Content Management Systems such as Blackboard, Drupal and Moodle, some Flash, Moviemaker, iMovie, Podcasting, Blogging, Wiki-ing, many Open Source Software packages (similar to commercial packages mentioned).

- Women's Center Webmaster 2007 to 2008
- Reentry Students Webmaster 2007 to 2008
- Vice Provost, Faculty Development Website Webmaster 2007 to 2008

## HONORS/AWARDS

- Research Grant from Graduate Student Senate, USU 2010
- Travel Grant from Graduate Student Senate, USU 2010
- Scholarship Recipient, Women's Center, USU 2009 to 2010
- Scholarship Recipient, Women's Center, USU 2008 to 2009
- Certificate of Appreciation, New Faculty Teaching Academy Diversity Panel, USU 2009
- USAID Certificate of Appreciation, Cairo, Egypt 2008
- Scholarship Recipient, Women's Center, USU 2007 and 2008
- Graduate Assistantship, USU 2007 and 2008
- Travel Grant, Graduate Senate, USU 2006 and 2007
- Graduate Assistantship, USU 2006, 2007
- Scholarship Recipient, Women's Center, USU 1998, 1999, 2000
- Commencement Speaker, USU graduation 2000
- Honor Student USU 1999, 2000
- Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Volunteer Service, Sevier County, Utah 1996
- Honor Student – Los Angeles Valley College 1972 to 1974

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### Instructor, Utah State University

Course	Title
<b>2010</b>	
• Twitter	How to use Twitter in education/ Undergrads USU
• Train the Trainers	In Egypt – USAID Trainers
<b>2009</b>	
• Camtasia	In Egypt – USAID Trainers
• Train the Trainers	In Egypt – USAID Trainers
<b>2008</b>	
• INST3500	Computer Tools for Pre-Service Teachers
• INST5205/6205	Computer Applications for Instruction and Training
• OSS Workshops	Free Software for Starving Students
<b>2007</b>	
• INST3500	Computer Tools for Pre-Service Teachers
• INST5280	Blogs, Wikis, New Media for Learning – Teacher Assistant
<b>2006</b>	
• INST5280	Blogs, Wikis, New Media for Learning – Teacher Assistant
<b>2005</b>	
• INST6870	Foundations (Distance Course) – Teacher Assistant

- Workshops                      Computers and the Disabled (Independent Living Center)
- 

**2010**

- AECT – International Student Media Festival (ISMF) – trained children in software applications

**1984 to 2004**

- Music – Piano, voice, guitar, mandolin (private instruction)

**GRANTS**

- Research Grant from Graduate Student Senate, USU (\$1,000)
- Travel Grant from Graduate Student Senate, USU (\$300)
- Travel Grant, Graduate Senate, USU (\$300)
- USAID – Field Training grant given to Jon Huntsman School of Business, USU. I was Team Leader over university students in a project that took us to Cairo, Egypt (\$2,500)
- URLEND (Utah Regional Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) a Training Grant (\$1,000)
- USAID – Field Training grant given to Jon Huntsman School of Business, USU. I was Team Leader over MBA students in a project that took us to Cairo, Egypt (\$2,500)
- EndVision Research and Evaluation, LLC – Grant awarded to study Impact of Reading First in Teacher Preparation for Native American Schools (\$300+ travel and living expenses)
- Project Assistant – Phase II, Utah State University – Government of the Dominican Republic Collaborative program in Instructional Technology (\$700 + airfare and living expenses)